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PUBLISHED MONTHLY

PRICE TWENTY CENTS

BULLETIN OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

VOLUME XXII

NEW YORK, APRIL, 1927

NUMBER 4



PORTRAIT OF ALFONSO D'ESTE
BY TITIAN

BULLETIN OF THE
METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

VOLUME XXII, NUMBER 4

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EARLY AMERICAN MINIATURES

The loan exhibition of American miniatures continues in Gallery C 31 A, the old Gold Room, through Sunday, April 24. As announced in the March BULLETIN, there are included more than three hundred carefully selected examples of the art as practised in America between 1720 and 1850 by some sixty artists. On the walls of the little gallery in which the miniatures are shown there have been hung portraits, drawings, and pastels of the period by such artists as Sharples, Saint-Mémin, Vanderlyn, Inman, and John Rubens Smith.

REOPENING OF THE CLOISTERS

The Cloisters reopened on April 1. Visitors will note that the reconstruction of the Cuxa cloister arcades has been completed during the winter. The marble necessary for the rebuilding of the arcades was obtained in France from the same quarry used by the Romanesque builders at Cuxa. The columns now stand on a low parapet, and the capitals are connected by round arches above which are three courses of stone. The arcades originally supported a timbered roof covered with tiles. For the present, this and the enclosing walls have been omitted, and only the stonework erected. Seen now in their proper architectural relation, the magnificently carved capitals are most impressive. Near the path leading to the entrance a stone cross has been erected.

A RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBITION
OF PAINTED AND PRINTED
FABRICS

A summer exhibition of painted and printed fabrics is in course of preparation and will open on May 16 in the gallery set aside for special exhibitions. On this occasion the gift of *toiles de Jouy* recently presented by William Sloane Coffin will be shown for the first time, and this will be supplemented by loans from celebrated European collections, notably those of G. P. Baker, Charles Percival, and Sir William Lawrence of London, as well as an interesting series from the private collection of Henri Clouzot, Conservateur of the Musée Galliera, Paris, whose latest and most important work on the subject is now in the Paris press. To these loans from European collectors will be added important pieces from private collections in America, including a group of historical "Event" handkerchiefs lent by Mrs. DeWitt Clinton Cohen.

THE PORTRAIT OF ALFONSO
D'ESTE BY TITIAN

Titian is known to have made two portraits of Duke Alfonso I of Ferrara. The date of the first may be surmised from old documents as about 1523-1525, shortly after the artist had completed his celebrated

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series of paintings for the Duke's *Studio* in the Ferrara castle—The Feast of Venus and The Bacchanal now in the Prado at Madrid and the Bacchus and Ariadne of the London National Gallery. Giovanni Bellini's Banquet of the Gods—the picture which Titian finished (at present belonging to Joseph E. Widener)—hung in the same room, where also Titian's The Tribute Money, of the Dresden Museum, was set into the woodwork of a door. Alfonso was Titian's earliest princely patron.

There is an uncertainty about the year of Titian's birth. On his own testimony in a dunning letter of 1571 to Philip II of Spain, he was then "an old man of ninety-five," but he was possibly exaggerating in order to stimulate the tardy generosity of that monarch. Many contemporaneous references make it reasonable to conclude that he was younger by ten years or even more than he claimed.¹ According to the generally accepted opinion on the subject Titian would have been in his late thirties at the date which we place as the time the Duke first sat to him.

The portrait was a famous work. Titian himself pointed it out to the Emperor Charles V as one of the finest pictures by him in the possession of Alfonso, and it won the praise of the most uncompromising critic and greatest genius of all Italy. Michelangelo had been made overseer and designer of the defenses of Florence when that city was in revolt against the Medici dukes and was expecting a siege by the combined armies of the Pope and Charles V, and was sent on a tour of investigation of modern fortifications. While at Ferrara on this mission in 1529 he was entertained by the Duke, and escorted over the palace. The likeness of Alfonso by Titian Michelangelo commended among all the treasures which were shown him. Alfonso, himself no mean connoisseur, valued this picture particularly and was loath to part with it when the exigencies of politics demanded that he do so in order to secure the good will of the Emperor by a gift of pictures.

For all his wealth and military genius the

Duke's position was precarious and only to be maintained by vigilant and adroit statesmanship—by quick shifts in alliances with the great powers that then made Italy their battle-ground. His city of Ferrara was peculiarly exposed to foreign attack and relied for its safety on its matchless fortifications and on the military and political skill of its rulers. The Ferrarese dukes were often forced to unpleasant expedients. For political purposes Ercole I had married Alfonso, his son and heir, to a beautiful widow of several husbands, the daughter of Pope Alexander VI, Lucrezia Borgia. Whatever the justness of her reputation, the event turned out happily, for she seems to have led a blameless life as his wife throughout the rest of her days.

The circumstances which forced Alfonso to part with his portrait were of long preparation but came to a climax in 1530 when Charles V, allied to Pope Clement VII, with all Italy at his feet, was crowned Emperor. Charles had himself made arbiter of an old dispute over the cities of Modena and Reggio, between the Duchy of Ferrara and the Papal States, and Alfonso was constrained to gain his good will. Pictures were the most effective bribes with the Emperor, and Covos, the Imperial Secretary, had prepared a little list of Titians belonging to the Duke, the gift of which would be productive of the best results; there was a portrait of the Emperor, the portrait of the Duke himself which Titian had spoken of, and the portrait of Ercole, Alfonso's son. At the negotiations which followed, Covos was imperative that whatever else might be chosen, the portrait of Alfonso should be included in the gift. In vain the Ferrarese agents urged that the portrait was an old one, no longer a resemblance, and that an up-to-date likeness would be preferable. Covos insisted on the original, as Titian had said that it was very fine. Alfonso was forced to give in. The picture was delivered into the Secretary's hands and in January, 1533, it was hanging in the Emperor's room at Bologna.²

¹See Herbert Cook in *The Nineteenth Century*, January, 1902, and in his *Giorgione*. Dr. Gronau, *Repertorium für Kunsthistorische Wissenschaft*, vols. XXIV and XXV, holds to the earlier date.

²The facts given above and those concerning the history of the second portrait, which follow, are related, with references to the documents, in Campori, *Tiziano e gli Estensi*.

To replace the portrait lost to him by the wiles of Covos, Alfonso commissioned Titian to paint a replica and directed that the new picture show him wearing the French order of Saint-Michel, a distinction received not long before from Francis I. The insignia of the order was sent to Venice and lent to Titian so that its representation should be correct. When Alfonso died in 1534 this second portrait was unfinished. It was received two years later by Ercole II and placed in the Ferrara palace. Vasari saw it there and in the first edition of the Lives, in 1550, describes it, "with an arm resting on a large cannon." Alfonso was proud of his cannon foundry, the most prominent in the world at his time. One of his cannon is famous to this day. When the Bolognese revolted against Pope Julius II and demolished Michelangelo's bronze statue of the Pope from over the city gate, it was Alfonso who received the fragments of the statue and cast them into a cannon which he named the Julia and placed on the platform of the castle at Ferrara.

Titian's second portrait was long supposed to be the picture in the Pitti Palace at Florence, which complies with the old descriptions; it shows Alfonso wearing the order of Saint-Michel and with his hand resting on a cannon. The more scrupulous connoisseurship of recent times, however, has decided that this painting is a copy after Titian and it is now labeled Dosso Dossi. There can be no doubt that this copy reproduces the general aspect and composition of Titian's second portrait even though the picture by his own hand has disappeared.

We hear of the first portrait for the last time in Italian documents as hanging in the Emperor's room in Bologna in 1533. It was carried into Spain and is mentioned in seventeenth-century inventories (1666 and 1686) as having been placed in the south gallery of the castle at Madrid, although it is there referred to as the "Duke of Urbino with his hand on a cannon." Mistakes in names are common in old inventories and the item of the cannon makes it certain that the portrait thus described represented Alfonso d'Este.

At this point all record of the picture

disappears. It has been supposed, but without any quotations from documents, that Titian's portrait of Alfonso was one of the works destroyed by fire at the conflagration of the castle in the eighteenth century. The supposition has often been repeated pretty much as an accepted fact.

The painting which is now shown in the Room of Recent Accessions is the portrait of Alfonso.³ That it is the work of Titian, all the critics who have seen it, with remarkable and unusual accord, agree. The noble design is his invention, and no one but he could have carried out in this rich and lustrous color such subtleties of detail, combined with breadth and solidity of form. Examine it close to and note these subtleties—the unevenness of the skin; the differences in the texture of the flesh, how here it sags and there it is drawn taut over the bones; the folds about the eyes; the slightly swollen lids, somewhat bloodshot; the inhaling nostrils; the puffy lower lip; even separate hairs of the beard are drawn out, and the hair, loosely combed off the forehead, would wave gently if blown on. Then move away and see how these fine distinctions disappear in the solidity and rotundity of the head marked boldly by only the most conspicuous and characteristic forms of the features. Notice too the great mass of the body to which the delicate sheen of the velvet folds and the pattern of the brocaded sleeves are entirely subservient. Observe also the splendid prehensibility of the hands, one resting elegantly on the smooth bronze of the cannon, the other, its strength in repose for the moment, holding the sword-scabbard lightly at his thigh. Only Titian could have painted the deep crimson velvet of the doublet, the soft fur of the collar, the liquid blue of the sapphire, and the glint of the pendent pearl on his chest. Surely our picture is one of his great achievements!

The careful rendering of its precise de-

³Oil on canvas; h. 50 $\frac{1}{2}$; w. 38 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Purchase, 1927. When sufficient income for the purpose shall have been received from the estate of the late Frank A. Munsey it is the intention of the Trustees of the Museum to assign the portrait to his bequest "as a worthy first purchase from that benefaction, without which they would have hardly felt at liberty to buy this important picture."

tails places the work early in Titian's full development, not far from the time of the *Bacchus* and *Ariadne* executed for the Duke's *Studio*, which shows a similar character of finish. As has been pointed out, that work can be dated about 1523, and the statement is warranted that our portrait was finished shortly after that date. Alfonso was about forty-seven at this time and in the portrait he may be no older than forty-seven, although from the evidence of looks in our own more tranquil lives he might be judged so.

Besides its evident superiority and its different handling our picture differs from the copy of the second portrait in the Pitti in several respects.⁴ The Duke is younger in our work by eight or ten years, one would say; he is in an easier and more commanding posture; the placing of the hands and their direction make a more flowing line in the composition; and lastly—an important fact for its identification—he wears a jewel hanging from a delicate gold chain about his neck and not the order of Saint-Michel. It is thus definitely proved that ours is not Titian's second portrait from which the picture in the Pitti was copied. Indeed, all the facts point to the astonishing conclusion that ours must be none other than Titian's first portrait of Alfonso—the picture which Titian himself considered one of his finest, which Michelangelo "highly commended," and which an Emperor and a Duke bickered over, the bribe price of two populous cities and wide territories!⁵

It has no pedigree. It turned up in Paris a little more than a year ago, having been bought as an unknown work out of the château of the Comtesse de Vögüé near Dijon. A. S. Drey, the Munich antiquary, secured the canvas and from him the Mu-

⁴The painting in the Pitti is larger than ours, though the figure itself is of about the same scale, that is to say, a trifle over life-size. It is possible that the canvas of our work may have lost a little at its edges in past remountings as is so often the case with old pictures.

⁵The identification of our picture with Titian's earlier portrait of Alfonso was first made by Dr. Georg Gronau. Dr. Gronau will publish his conclusions in a forthcoming number of the *Jahrbuch der preussischen Kunstsammlungen*.

seum bought it in February. No one knows how it reached France. Many pictures were carried out of Spain at the time of the Napoleonic wars. Uncertainties of titles of ownership might have induced a reticence in regard to the ascriptions and provenance of some of these, and a merely oral tradition held by only a few would be in danger of disappearing in the course of several generations. But these are idle suppositions, and unimportant after all, in comparison with the merit of the painting.

One finds in the picture not only the likeness of Alfonso, but something more as well—the grandeur and magnificence of a prince in Renaissance Italy. It is both a likeness and a ceremonial representation. The head is proudly poised above the exaggerated bulk of the shoulders, made gigantic by means of the broad fur collar and the heavily padded oversleeves. At first glance one feels the idealization. Thus the Duke wished to go down to posterity—commanding and illustrious. He is conscious that he is observed by all. Then one sees the man himself not on parade. It is by no mere accident of birth that he maintains his dukedom; it is fought for and won by each day's decisions. Though still under fifty his face already shows the ravages of high stakes and desperate hazards. He is cruel and resolute like a beast of prey, crafty, self-confident, greedy though most fastidious, and with it all grandiose and sumptuous like the Late Renaissance itself—which indeed he perfectly typifies.

BRYSON BURROUGHS.

A GREEK RELIEF

Once again the Museum has had the good fortune to acquire for the Classical Department a piece of the highest quality—the finest that has come its way since the purchase of the bronze horse. This time it is not a new "find," but a work long known and admired—the marble relief of the girl with the pigeons from Brocklesby Park (figs. 1 and 2; height, 31½ inches [80 cm.]).¹

¹Placed in the Room of Recent Accessions; later it will be moved to the Fifth Classical Room. Casts of the relief are for sale.

All we know of its history is that it was found in the island of Paros in 1785 and was there acquired by Sir Richard Worsley, an English collector, who was spending two years traveling in Greece. It subsequently passed with the rest of the Worsley Collection to Lord Yarborough, and has been in the sculpture gallery at Brocklesby Park until a few weeks ago when it was packed up to be sent to our Museum. In its comparative seclusion in the two English country seats, first on the Isle of Wight and then in Lincolnshire, few people have had the opportunity to see it; but it is reproduced and described in many books.²

We could have no more typical work of Greek sculpture than this little grave relief. It is evidently a memorial to a girl who is represented quietly standing holding her two pigeons, one of them perched on her hand, the other clasped to her breast, its beak touching her lips; by this movement the overfold of the girl's chiton has become slightly displaced. It is a subject directly observed from every-day life, a momentary action, and yet somehow not transitory; rather epitomizing the tender, playful child that had to die so early.

This translation from a simple act to something typical and permanent is what constitutes the greatness of Greek art. Its subjects are always straightforward and concrete; they are neither mystical nor sentimental; but the pure beauty of their presentation fills us with the same sense of mystery and emotion that we may derive from a Chinese Buddha or an Italian Crucifixion. So completely is art independent of its subject matter and so wholly is its emotional impression contingent on the treatment of the subject.

In what does the "pure beauty" of the Greek rendering consist in our stele—if we may dare to put in words what defies analy-

²E.g., Museum Worsleyanum, 1794, I, pl. 35; Michaelis, *Ancient Marbles in Great Britain*, p. 229, no. 17; *Antike Denkmäler*, I, pl. 54; Waldmann, *Griechische Originale*, pl. 79; Winter, *Kunstgeschichte in Bildern*, I, p. 239, 6; Rösch, *Altägyptische Marmorwerke von Paros*, Dissert., Kiel, 1914, p. 30, no. 7; S. Reinach, *Répertoire de Reliefs*, II, 440, 4; Springer-Wolters, *Handbuch der Kunstgeschichte*, I (12th edition), p. 305, fig. 569.

sis? Is it not principally in the simplification, the decorative quality which is substituted for the complication and diversity of nature—but which nevertheless does not transgress nature? The girl's garment is arranged in comparatively few, significant folds, beautifully composed yet bringing out admirably both the chief forms of the figure and the heavy quality of the material. The hair, knotted behind in a charmingly natural manner, is rendered in a series of separate wavy strands forming an effective design. The modeling of the face and arms shows not the many modulations of nature, only a subtle variation of the surface, and yet all essentials are indicated—down to the dimple at the elbow, and the swellings for the wrist and the knuckles; the rather abnormally large head, often characteristic of children, helps to convey the delicate age of the girl—a useful device at a time when a realistic rendering of children was not yet attempted. The pose is completely natural, yet it too is clearly a conscious composition. This element of design based on observation of nature imparts to our little girl the repose and serenity typical of Greek art.

The preservation of the relief is excellent, only very few parts being missing: the head of one pigeon (which must have been turned backward), pieces of the girl's right thumb and forefinger, a number of chips especially in the drapery, and a fragment from the upper edge of the slab. It is rare that a piece of Greek sculpture has survived in this condition. Nevertheless, to appreciate the original appearance of the relief we must imagine some important additions. It was once surmounted by an akroterion for the fastening of which there are two holes in the upper edge. This finial was probably a palmette like that which so effectively crowns the stele of the girl with the casket in Berlin.³ Furthermore we must remember that the relief was originally painted, as was all Greek sculpture throughout its long history. The hair was perhaps a reddish brown, the garment some other color which stood out against a painted background, and the flesh parts also toned

³Berlin Museum, no. 1482; *Antike Denkmäler*, I, pl. 33.



FIG. 1. MARBLE RELIEF
GREEK, ABOUT 455-450 B.C.

—the whole a rich harmony of pure colors. No trace of such paint now remains,⁴ and yet we have evidence of its former presence, for some details not indicated by modeling were clearly dependent on such additions; for instance, the eye of the pigeon (for which there is now merely a rough depression), the round brooch or button which fastened the chiton on the shoulder, the iris of the girl's eye, the straps of the sandals.

the feathers of the pigeons.⁵ The material is Parian marble, which was the most highly prized in antiquity for sculpture, and which in this case was of course easily obtained for a "home product."

The approximate date of the relief is not difficult to determine. Its mixture of stylization and naturalism is characteristic of the transition period of the second quarter of the fifth century—the years which pro-



FIG. 2. GIRL WITH PIGEONS
DETAIL OF MARBLE RELIEF
GREEK, ABOUT 455-450 B.C.

Probably there was also some indication of

⁴The remains of green color and of mortar along the edges are of course not original; nor the black stain which appears once to have covered the whole surface and which still shows on the bottom ledge and the feet.

⁵There is a small round hole in the tail of the nearer pigeon, between the tips of the wings. If it is original—as it seems to be—its purpose is not clear. Michaelis in his publication suggests that "there was probably a metal ornament there, perhaps a cord"; but there is no corresponding hole elsewhere for the attachment of the other end of such a cord; the depression beneath the thumb is not deep enough.

duced such masterpieces as the Olympia sculptures and the Delphi charioteer. Compared with the Olympia sculptures (about 465-460 B.C.) our stele appears slightly more advanced; for there is more diversity in the drapery, a few more transverse folds are introduced, and there is less insistence on the vertical grooves. On the other hand, our girl is distinctly earlier than the maidens walking in procession on the Parthenon frieze (about 442-438 B.C.), since the latter show a much more naturalistic treatment; the drapery, the face, the hair, everything

is there more realistic. Between these two dated monuments, then, it is safe to place our relief. But we can be more precise. Compared with such related works as the Mourning Athena in Athens and the stele of the girl with the casket in Berlin—which may be dated about 460–450 B.C.—ours appears slightly later; for in it the forms of the

TWO ACQUISITIONS OF CHINESE CERAMICS

The Museum's collection of early Chinese pottery has been enriched by the acquisition of a very beautiful T'ang piece of a most unusual kind (fig. 1). It is a splendidly designed bowl in the shape of an open lotus



FIG. 1. GLAZED POTTERY BOWL
CHINESE, T'ANG PERIOD (618-906)

body are more rounded and the eye is in correct profile view, which is not yet attained in the other two reliefs. The Myronic Athena in Frankfort (about 450 B.C.) comes very near to our stele in its fairly advanced naturalism, but is a few years later. Therefore our relief may be dated about 455–450 B.C. They were momentous years in the history of Paros, for they mark the loss of her much cherished independence and the foundation of the Athenian Empire.

GISELA M. A. RICHTER.

flower, supported by four lions which stand on the seed-pod of a second lotus, whose petals, past their first bloom, hang down and form a cup-shaped base corresponding to the upper bowl. Between the standing lions are four lion masks, all of which evidently at one time carried rings. The piece is exceptionally well modeled, particularly so in respect to the lotus petals, and is carefully finished with incised lines. It is wholly covered with a green-brown glaze, of the usual T'ang pottery type, which has

become iridescent in many places and on the rim has almost disappeared.

The striking beauty of the piece is due to its fine proportions and rational, well-thought-out construction. It is now shown in the Room of Recent Accessions together with another acquisition of a very different type of ceramics.

This is an early porcelain vase with a bold underglaze blue decoration, and a curious square cover of a sort rarely found intact (fig. 2). At first sight it might be considered a piece dating from the early Ming period, but it does not quite fit into any of the various early Ming categories which we are gradually learning to recognize. The vase belongs to a family of porcelains which are found in tombs and for which a Sung origin is claimed. Unfortunately this claim has not been verified, as scientific excavation has up to now been almost impossible in China. Blue and white porcelains have been seen which were reported to have been found in recognized Sung tombs, but such reports were based on information received by dealers from their agents and they may or may not be correct. Certainly Chinese literature refers to Sung blue and white porcelains and perhaps our piece and similar ones are of that period, but in our present state of knowledge the dating necessarily remains a matter of opinion.

This vase, like the other tomb finds, is of a rather porous clay which is light in weight and apt to burn brown-red where exposed to the heat in firing. The porcelain itself is

different from the harder and more finished products of the Ming period which we know well. The underglaze blue is generally somewhat grayish, and though on this vase it is strong and well-fired, on other examples it is sometimes apt to run with the glaze. The glaze itself is of a beautiful soft texture most agreeable to the touch, very like that of the white porcelains of the Yüan period which bear the "Shu fu" mark. Perhaps therefore the truth lies in the middle and our piece should be attributed to the Yüan period.

At all events it is a beautiful jar of noble proportions, very effectively capped by its square cover, and with a strong, well-designed decoration. It is an excellent example of this early ware and may be of help in the solution of the dating problem.

S. C. BOSCH REITZ.



FIG. 2. PORCELAIN VASE
CHINESE, YÜAN PERIOD(?), 1280-1368

A PORTRAIT BY SARGENT

The Museum has purchased Sargent's well-known Portrait of the Wyndham Sisters, Lady Elcho, Mrs. Tennant, and Mrs. Adeane. The painting is on exhibition in Gallery A 12. In connection with its purchase we remember with interest a comment by Royal Cortissoz which appeared in the New York Herald Tribune of October 17, 1926:

"Apropos of Sargent . . . it is exciting to learn that the greatest of all his portrait groups has been placed in the hands of the Knoedlers, in London, for sale. We wish that an American might buy it and establish it in the Metropolitan Museum. It is the painting of 'Lady Elcho, Mrs. Tennant and

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PORTRAIT OF THE WYNDHAM SISTERS
BY JOHN SINGER SARGENT

Mrs. Adeane,' which made the sensation of the Royal Academy in 1900. The present writer can remember, as though it were yesterday, standing before the portrait then with Augustus Saint-Gaudens, who had, in fact, come to the exhibition to see no other work. He was unreservedly enthusiastic. It was Sargent's masterpiece. The sculptor was hurrying off to America the next day, but somehow he would find time to see his friend or congratulate him by letter. London was astir with the beautiful success of the thing. It was the painter's best bid in his challenge to the older English tradition.

"It holds within itself, as in a parable, a clew to Sargent's differentiation from his predecessors. On the wall in the background hangs his shadowy version of the portrait that Watts painted of Mrs. Percy Wyndham, the mother of the ladies in the foreground. That is the portrait which the English biographer says, 'Probably to his mind came nearer than any other toward that attainment to style always kept in view by him.' We have seen the masterpiece in question. It breathes the specific attribute of great portraiture—serenity. The distinguished Victorian painter achieved through simplicity what the eighteenth century was wont to get through powers of academic ordonnance. Sargent faced the test boldly in 'The Three Graces,' as his painting was promptly dubbed. He confronted the noble dignity of an older generation with the nervous tension of the new. Insensibly, perhaps, he followed the more capricious movement which springs from that tension. The three figures are woven into a coherent, but not precisely reposeful design. Unity is there, but the symmetry of which Sir Joshua made so much is missing.

"But we think of Kipling's line: 'He works miracles and sometimes they come off.' This miracle came off. The doughty shade of Watts did not, after all, rebuke the modern and restless note in the foreground. There, to our mind, was Sargent's victory. It resided in his fidelity to the carriage and demeanor of his time, in his refusal to adapt the formalism of the eighteenth century to an era which had long

discarded it as merely incongruous. As a virtuoso in paint he could easily meet Reynolds on his own ground. There is heavenly brushwork in 'The Three Graces.' As a painter holding the mirror up to life he was bound to portray his three ladies as denizens of a modern world, and this he did unflinchingly. He chose to be spontaneous instead of 'monumental.' The result is a remarkable work of art, an Old World 'court' portrait transposed into the terms of the twentieth century and kept vitalized by the power of genius."

PERSIAN VELVETS OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

A generous gift from V. Everit Macy has enriched the collection of textiles at the Museum with two important and extremely rare sixteenth-century Persian velvets in silk and gold. One of these (fig. 1) is decorated with a figure subject, the other (fig. 2) with a floral design. Until recently only seventeen sixteenth-century velvets were known and published (by Martin, Dreger, and Kendrick). Silk velvets, because of their great technical perfection and beauty, were very highly estimated even in the seventeenth century. Our two panels with twenty-eight others were used for the interior decoration of a tent.¹ It is said that these velvets were captured by the Turkish Sultan Solyman I (1520-1566) during one of his invasions of Persia—which took place in the years 1534, 1538, 1547, and 1554—a quite likely occurrence. It is said also that during the second siege of Vienna by Kara Mustapha Pasha in the year 1683, Solyman's war tent, used also by his successors, was abandoned by the Turks after they had been defeated by the Polish king, Jan Sobieski. Thus it came into the possession of a Polish general and remained in his family until recently.

Persian velvets with figure subjects illustrate scenes from great Persian epics such as the *Shahnameh* (Book of Kings) by Firdusi or the romantic poems of Nizami. Often they depict the leisurely life of Per-

¹The top piece is in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; two other panels in a private collection in New York.

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FIG. I. ISKANDER KILLING A DRAGON
SILK VELVET, PERSIAN, ABOUT 1540

sian nobles and princes in hunting- or drinking-scenes. In figure 1 we see an example of a velvet superior to any pieces known hitherto.² It illustrates the story of Iskander (Alexander) killing a dragon with a rock. Iskander stands in a charming landscape consisting of flowering trees with pheasants, bushes, and irises naturalistically treated. Landscape always plays an important rôle in Persian art and is often used for the expression of a mood. The color scheme is confined to a few colors, such as wine red, light green, dark blue, light and dark tan, and black on a background of natural-colored silk into which thin gold *lamellae* were loosely woven. In the repetition of the design the weaver of this velvet changed the colors of costumes and other motifs, giving thus a more vivid pattern. The colors are purely decorative, the trees and leaves are red, the dragons alternately red and light tan, the pheasants green or tan. In the armory of Moscow there is a coat of silk brocade decorated with the same pattern as our velvet.³ The posture of Iskander and his costume, except the turban, are identical

²Martin, F. R., *Figurale persische Stoffe*, 1899, and *Die persischen Prachtstoffe im Schlosse Rosenborg in Kopenhagen*, 1901; *Die Ausstellung von Meisterwerken muhammedanischer Kunst in München*, vol. III, pls. 189-202; Kendrick, A. F. and Arnold, T. W., *Persian Stuffs with Figure-Subjects*, *Burlington Magazine*, vol. 37, pp. 237-244.

in both stuffs, but the landscape and the character of the style seem to be much quieter and simpler in our velvet. Velvets woven in silk and gold, of the type seen in figure 1, were used for garments at the court of Persian Shahs and served also as gifts to rulers of Europe and Asia.⁴ Hammer in his *History of the Ottoman Empire*⁴ tells us about the Persian envoy who in 1560 came to Adrianople on the occasion of the ascension to the throne of Sultan Selim II, and his following of three hundred Persians dressed in costumes woven in various colors with figures of birds and animals. He further relates the reception of the Persian envoy at the court of Sultan Selim in 1579. The envoy was dressed in an overgarment of red velvet bordered by floral design and an undergarment decorated with figural representations. His following of Moors wore costumes of gold stuffs, velvets, and silks with inwoven figures of lions, tigers, horses, and men.

Besides silk 'garments decorated with figure subjects we

often find in Persian miniatures costumes of silk with naturalistic or conventional floral design. A portion of such a velvet is illustrat-

³Die Ausstellung von Meisterwerken muhammedanischer Kunst in München, 1910, vol. III, pls. 196, 197.

⁴Martin, F. R., *Die persischen Prachtstoffe im Schlosse Rosenborg in Kopenhagen*, 1901, pp. 12-13.



FIG. 2. PANEL OF SILK VELVET
PERSIAN, ABOUT 1540

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ed in figure 2. The design consists of interlaced bands forming ogival compartments and interrupted by peony palmettes familiar to us from sixteenth-century Persian rugs. Within the compartments are palmettes consisting of leaf-bordered pear shapes and peony palmettes. In the background of the pattern appear fine floral stems with small and large rosettes and conventionalized tulips. The predominant color is dark blue; other colors are yellow, red, light and dark tan, on a background woven with gold *lamellae* intact on the edges, which originally were folded and thus saved from wear. The design of figure 2 has many interesting features for students of Near Eastern textiles. Similar palmettes appear in textiles as early as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and are of Chinese origin. The main composition of bands forming compartments and several motifs such as tulips became popular in Turkish velvets and were doubtless derived from Persia.

Both pieces (figs. 1 and 2) are identical in technique and color scheme and were doubtless woven in the same manufactory. Centers of silk weaving, often mentioned in literary sources, were Yezd, Kashan, Resht, and Ispahan. The finest velvets and brocades were probably woven in the court manufactories under the supervision of painters.

The dating of Persian velvets with figure subjects is confined by scholars to a period between 1550 and 1650. The sixteenth-century ones are generally assigned to the middle or to the second half of the sixteenth century. With the help of dated Persian miniatures, whose painters often designed the patterns for brocades and carpets, we can establish a somewhat earlier chronology and ascribe the earliest velvets and brocades to a period between 1530 and 1550. Many of the figures of velvets and brocades resemble so much the style of Sultan Muhammad's paintings that they were probably designed by him.⁶ Other brocades show the style of another famous painter, Ustad Muhammadi, and can thus be assigned to a period around 1550. In their

style of figures and landscape our velvets are also related to the famous hunting carpets in silk, one of them formerly in the possession of the Emperor of Austria, now in the Museum of Industrial Art at Vienna, the other in the collection of Baron Rothschild at Paris.⁶ These generally are ascribed to the second half of the sixteenth century, though it seems to me that they are rather of about 1540, a period to which our velvets also may be assigned.

M. S. DIMAND.

AN EXHIBITION OF GRAPHIC TECHNIQUES

The first print gallery has been rehung with a group of miscellaneous prints of all periods and many kinds selected with a view to showing some of the varieties of effect produced by the historically more important graphic processes. Thus, while it contains a good many prints of very considerable artistic stature, it necessarily contains also many that have been chosen solely for the clarity with which they exhibit certain technical qualities. The prints bear explanatory labels in which an attempt has been made to call attention to their techniques.

The following note about technique may be regarded as a general label for the exhibition, since it deals with a number of matters that it was impossible to bring out explicitly in the small labels or apropos particular prints but which are of interest in connection with the exhibition taken as a whole.

This exhibition may be regarded as a commentary upon the discussion, which has so long and so much agitated theorists and students, of the relation between the "technique" and the "content" of a work of art.

In paintings and drawings it is often difficult, if not impossible, even in thought, to separate the technique of the picture from its subject matter, but in prints this difficulty is not nearly so common.

⁶Martin, F. R., The Miniature Painting and Painters of Persia, India, and Turkey, from the VIII to XVIII Century, pls. 116, 117, 133.

Until the commercial development of modern photographic processes in the second half of the nineteenth century, all printed pictures were, of necessity, made without the intervention of the camera. Thus, any printed picture, no matter what it represented, made prior to some time in the middle of the last century was a print, i.e., an etching, engraving, woodcut, or lithograph just exactly as much as any original work of art produced in the same medium.

At all times since about the middle of the sixteenth century, by far the greater number of all prints produced have been reproductive and not original, and the natural result has been that the norm of technical achievement in any one of the graphic arts has been determined not by original artists but by men whose life was devoted to translation or reproduction. The beholder of an original print is able to tell about the idea and the nuance that the artist desired to convey only by inspection of his actual performance. In original prints, therefore, as in paintings, it is impossible to distinguish very clearly between technique and idea. But in the case of the reproductive print, the original always being in existence for comparison with the reproduction, it is possible to dissociate the engraver's technique from the painter's subject matter. Because of this, very great stress has been laid at various times upon the ability of the engraver or etcher to reproduce such things as the sheen of satin, the sparkle of crystal, or the texture of fur. Many reputations in fact, and among them some very great ones, have been founded upon this particular kind of reproductive skill, in spite of the fact that it falls into the category of craftsmanship rather than that of artistry. Collectors and critics having failed to observe the distinction between these two things, there have been long periods in the history of prints during which artistic originality and inventiveness have been thought much less important than the sheerest imitative craftsmanship. Today, thanks to the pervasion of photography, imitative technique in the graphic arts is at length in a way to fall back into its correct place.

At a time when, as in the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century, every publisher of engravings carried in stock reproductions, in various sizes, of popular masterpieces such as the Sistine Madonna, the only way that one engraver had of distinguishing himself as against another engraver was by the introduction into his work of some crafty technical trick. To this necessity of the engraver who desired a reputation may be traced some of the most extraordinary artificialities that are known in the history of art. One of the most typical of these was the trick of putting dots or flicks in the lozenge-shaped spaces made by the intersection of two overlying series of almost parallel lines. This particular trick, which has survived up to our own time in paper money, postage stamps, and similar things, has no representational value whatever. It is a purely mechanical device for filling space with an even tint. It is more odious than tedious and more tedious than difficult, and yet for a period of three or four generations it was so much the "correct" way of laying tints that tidy-minded persons who liked its metronomic precision and cleanliness found the free linear play of the creative draftsman not only disconcerting but vulgar. The same kind of thing exactly happened in a later graphic technique which reached its highest development in this country. One remembers with pleasure an old art editor who came to the office in a great stew because, as he stated, he simply could not understand how anybody could prefer the "rough, coarse, clumsy" woodcuts by Dürer and Titian to the "lovely masterpieces" full of "beautiful, sweet lines" which had appeared in our magazines in the eighties and nineties. The reason for the old gentleman's discomfiture was precisely that he had never realized that in the "rough, coarse Dürers" the technique of the wood-cutter played a rôle wholly minor to that of the great designer and was completely absorbed in the final result, whereas, in the engravings in our magazines, it was the engraver who was important and the designer and his design that had the minor rôles. In his day, one could recognize at sight the work of such a

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wood-engraver as a Kruell, or a Kingsley, or a Wolff, but one often found it extremely difficult (without looking at signatures) to recognize the draftsman whose picture had been engraved. And this scale of relative importances was accepted by the public.

Discarding further thought of reproductive work, let us, for a moment, look at technique in original prints. As pointed out above, there is no way of checking back the actual result produced by the original etcher or lithographer against the effect that he was attempting to get, because all that we have to go by is what he actually succeeded in getting. Starting from this as a premise, it is obvious that any original print in which the technique is superior in interest to the subject matter is an artistic failure just exactly as is any print in which the subject matter overwhelms or destroys technique. In all the really successful prints, subject matter and technique are so interwoven that it is impossible to think of one without thinking of the other, to differentiate between the thing stated and the way of saying it.

It is perhaps easier for people who have not thought about this matter in connection with pictures to deal with it in a purely literary way. Let any one take the sonnet "Earth has not anything to show more fair," and see whether or not he can dissociate the matter from the manner. The matter, if stated in the jargon of the street, would be banal and commonplace beyond expression, no more interesting than the conversations one overhears in a sightseeing bus, but the poet took those very commonplace sentiments and, with his imaginative technique, transformed them into one of the most sonorous and marvelous things in English. He transmuted the elements that he worked with, so that in the event there was no mechanical mixture of things, each recognizable in itself, each keeping its particular quality, but a new, wholly different thing, bearing no qualitative relation or semblance to any of the ingredients that went to its making. One man mixes hydrogen and oxygen and they remain merely a mixture of gases, another man takes those same gases and so treats them that they become water, a new thing

with many physical and psychological qualities, as, for example, surface tension and wetness, of which neither belonged to either of the original gases.

It is suggested that perhaps as good a criterion as any for judging the success of a picture is the extent to which technique and subject matter have been handled as the second chemist handled his hydrogen and oxygen. Also, it is always well to bear in mind that, just as there can be no technique without subject matter to express, so can there be no subject matter unless there is a technique to express it with. In the event, it all comes down to a question of balance, for without that, the emergence of the new thing which is a real picture is impossible. Their failure to observe this balance is one of the principal reasons why so many clever men are such bad picture makers, why so few of the great technicians have made great prints. And in the necessity for this balance is to be found the great reason for subject matter—that poor scapegoat of the modern studios.

W. M. IVINS, JR.

A STUDY EXHIBITION OF GUNS

For some time the Department of Arms and Armor has been gathering material for a study collection with which to serve the needs of those who study armor from the technical and historical as well as from the aesthetic point of view. The Department has recently been assigned two galleries in the basement of Wing H, at the foot of the stairs from the main armor hall; one of these is eventually to contain this study collection. The other, it is planned, will be used for exhibits of special subjects connected with arms and armor, which will be changed from time to time.

For the initial exhibition in this lower study room (opened last month) the Department has been fortunate in securing for the period of one year the loan of a number of guns, mainly from the collection of William G. Renwick, who has also given freely of time and effort in assisting us to classify and label the specimens. In accordance with the plan of the study rooms the guns have been arranged not primarily as ob-

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jects of art, but rather as steps in a number of evolutional series, which in turn are placed arbitrarily around the room. Each series is provided with a label showing the position of the group in the general history of firearms and describing the individual specimens of which the group is composed.

The first of these developmental groups is against the south wall, opposite the entrance to the gallery, and contains a fine series of early hunting guns of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, designed for extreme accuracy and also notable for high artistic merit. The group admirably illustrates the gradual but continuous transition of the stock from the crude, straight staff of the sixteenth century to an elaborate, carefully designed form approaching that of the sharpshooter's rifle of the present day. The gradual alteration of the lock-plate is also well shown, as is the evolution of the trigger and trigger-guard. Several of the guns in this group are of extraordinary quality, especially No. 2 (illustrated), which has a finely carved barrel and a stock completely encased in engraved bone and bears in several places the arms of the Elector of Saxony, and No. 3, the stock of which is entirely veneered with tortoise-shell.

On the right-hand (west) wall are six cases, of which the first illustrates the history of the blunderbuss. One of the specimens is a piece of great rarity from the little Spanish town of Ripoll and has the added interest of having traditionally belonged to one of the grim pirates with whom Morgan harried the Spanish Main. Another was found walled up in the chimney-corner of an old house in Gloucester, Massachusetts—the secret last resort of some hardy Puritan.

Next comes (Group 3) a case of "Kentucky Rifles"—the beautifully designed and finished weapons of the American pioneer. Above the case hangs a double-barreled Austrian sporting gun of the period, almost identical in construction and clearly showing how the frontier gunsmiths copied all the best features of the most costly weapons of the Old World, while adding to them inventions of their own to make the weapons safe and certain for use in the backwoods. No refinement of gun-

smithing was too good for the riflemen who fought in the van of the American march westward—their rifles were their most precious, often their only, possessions, and a hair-trigger or other fitting often could give a badly needed advantage against the ever-ready tomahawk.

In Group 4 are breech-loading firearms dating from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, one of which, a wheellock (lent by Bashford Dean) dated 1638, loads with steel cartridges, and has the added interest of being self-winding. Another, dated 1657, has a breech action like that of modern naval cannon. It is, perhaps, not generally realized that the grandees of Europe hunted with breech-loading firearms while our ancestors were first settling the eastern coast of America. Even more astonishing are the repeating flintlock guns of Group 5. These include among others a fourteen-shot model intended for military use. Think what a regiment armed with these repeaters could have done against troopers whose muzzle-loaders fired at best one shot in two minutes! Another extraordinary arm empties four successive shots from parallel chambers into a funnel-shaped barrel—a clever idea, surely, but we wonder how well it worked and how frequently all four shots went off at once, the bullets jamming the neck of the funnel.

The next two cases, Groups 6 and 7, illustrate the principal types of military guns from the simple matchlock to the percussion period. The British and American Revolutionary arms are shown, as are the Mexican War and the Union and Confederate Civil War arms. A fine gun with the uncommon Vauban lock (a combination match- and flint-lock) is included, while above the cases hang other curious arms, including interesting matchlock variations and a fine specimen of the rare snap-haunce (early flintlock) type.

On the north wall Group 8 contains a number of odd pieces. Several specimens show the development of the strange "tschinke," a gun with a butt shaped like a deer's hoof. One wheellock gun is equipped with a high-speed gear, another with a miniature smokestack to make the arm wind-, rain-, and flash-proof. The interest-

ing "dog lock" guns, with their curious hooked safety device, are also shown.

Against the east wall stand Groups 9 and 10, the first of which contains a remarkable series of single-barrel flintlock fowling-pieces, arranged by quarter centuries. The specimens present illustrate the typical sporting arms of 1668, 1680, 1700, 1725, 1750, 1775, and 1800. Group 10 contains double-barreled sporting arms, both smooth-bored and rifled, and includes pieces of rather later date, with especial emphasis on the little-known period of transition between the flintlock and the percussion arm of our own fathers.

In table cases are other guns in their original boxes equipped with all the accessories which were so necessary in the days before it was possible to buy standardized cartridges at the nearest hardware store. The specimens include an unusually fine nineteenth-century air gun, a fowling-piece of the Emperor Maximilian of Mexico, and a double-barreled Lancaster rifle, a curious arm the barrels of which contain two deep spiral grooves to fit a belted bullet.

There are also exhibited in this room the collection of guns and pistols bequeathed to the Museum in 1919 by the late Charles M. Schott, of which mention has already been made in the BULLETIN,¹ together with two cases of fine pistols lent by Theodore Offerman and previously exhibited, like the Schott Collection, in Gallery H 6 on the main floor.

The lower study room of the Department of Arms and Armor is small, and the number of pieces which it can contain is limited, but it can safely be said that the present exhibition,

¹Vol. XIV, p. 94.

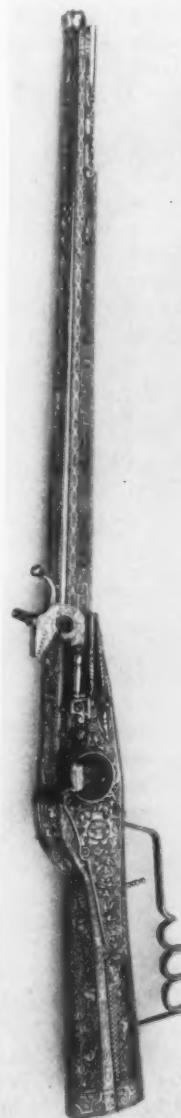
coupled with the specimens exhibited in the upstairs armor galleries, makes it possible for the student of the weapons of the past to obtain a fairly accurate idea of the history of firearms from its crude beginnings, through the splendid period of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to the purely utilitarian epoch which culminates in the plain but deadly engines of destruction of the present day.

THOMAS T. HOOPES.

A DATED KORAN-STAND

In Gallery D 3, where are exhibited many specimens of Near Eastern rug weaving, one may see a Koran-stand in wood (*kursy*) with carved decoration, acquired in 1910. The *kursy* is without doubt a superb example of Mohammedan wood-carving of the fourteenth century. The importance of this *kursy* is greatly enhanced by the fact that it is dated, in the month *Zul-l-Hidjaja*, the year 761 A. H. (Oct.-Nov. 1360 A.D.), and inscribed with the name of the carver, Hasan ibn Sulaiman Isfahani. The elaborate decoration covers both boards of the stand, and consists of floral and geometrical ornaments with inscriptions, which as always in the art of the Near East are of a highly decorative character. The inscriptions contain the names of the twelve Imams, blessings, and dedications. The arrangement of the decoration is alike on both sides except that the ornament is changed in several places, to avoid monotonous

repetition in the design. The upper parts of the stand show two square panels in which the ornament is carved in three planes. The lowest one consists of decorative writ-



HUNTING GUN
SAXON, XVI CENTURY

ing over which (fig. 2) are carved fine arabesques forming circular spirals. Over these is carved in a higher relief writing consisting of the word Allah four times repeated. The other side (fig. 1) shows again the three planes of ornamentation. Over the decorative writing one can see, instead of the arabesques, naturalistic floral scrolls with leaves, flowers, and palmettes. As in figure 2 the word Allah four times repeated forms the third and top plane of decoration.

The two large rectangular panels on the lower part of the stand suggest in their decoration mihrabs or prayer niches. In the center of each panel are two arched compartments. The outer one has a lobed arch terminating in a palmette filled with feathered leaves. The inner compartment has a cypress-like tree, covered with small rosettes growing out of a vase in a stand. The intervening space has a pierced decoration of arabesques. The upper part of the outer compartment is decorated with elegantly composed Arabic writing on a background of arabesques. The lower part in figure 2 shows interlaced arabesques and Cufic writing in a lozenge diaper; in figure 1, arabesques interlaced with a lozenge diaper. The intervening spaces of the rectangular panels are decorated with plants bearing naturalistic leaves, small and large flowers on a background of finely carved arabesques forming the second ornamental plane. The upper and lower panels are bordered by bands and variously shaped panels of inlaid wood.

Striking features of the decoration are the masterly technique of wood-carving, the partly naturalistic style of the floral ornamentation, and the coloristic effect of light and dark, produced either by a deep undercutting of the background, as for instance in the large panels, or by an *à jour* decoration as we see it in the compartment with the cypress tree. The technique of carving the ornament in several planes, practised in Egypt and Asia Minor during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, is here developed to a very high degree.

Another characteristic of our kursy is the naturalistic style of plants. The naturalistic element is absent in the wood-carving

of Egypt and Asia Minor.¹ Doors and prayer pulpits (*mimbars*) of Egypt are divided into variously shaped panels separately carved with purely conventional arabesques which in modified form can be seen on Seljuk doors and kursis of Asia Minor. Naturalistic motifs appear on some Syro-Egyptian metal vessels and are a result of Persian influence. Persian ceramic art of the fourteenth century shows a well-developed naturalistic style which is of Chinese origin and came to Persia with the Mongols. We find naturalistic ornament also on costumes, covers, and tents of Persian miniatures of the Mongol school.² Both the motifs and the style of this ornament are familiar to us from Chinese porcelains of the Sung and Yuan dynasties. Of special interest to us are several late fourteenth-century ink drawings attributed to the school of West Turkestan.³ The style and the decoration are decidedly Chinese in character. The large palmettes derived from the peony, lotus, and other species appear on long naturalistic stems and resemble the floral decoration of our stand. The outlines of the large flowers in the drawings are finely scalloped and often, as on the kursy, are treated more like palmettes than actual flowers though the leaves, stems, and some flowers have a purely naturalistic appearance. The flowers of the kursy consist of several types, such as small rosettes, peony-like flowers, and large composite forms which have their parallels in Chinese art and in drawings of West Turkestan. The large flowers of the kursy are composed of a number of small carved petals which give them an aspect different in character and style from familiar Persian forms.

According to the inscription the kursy was made by an artist from Ispahan. This does not necessarily indicate that it was made in Ispahan, as Persian artists often changed their domicile and worked in other cities or provinces. We know very little

¹ Meisterwerke muhammedanischer Kunst, vol. III, pls. 246-250.

² Schulz, Die persisch-islamische Miniaturmalerei, pls. 16-18, 21.

³ Kühnel, Miniaturmalerei im islamischen Orient, pls. 28-31.

about Persian wood-carving of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. We have to go farther east to Samarkand in West Turkestan to find large panels and doors with carved decorations. A very fine fif-

the beginning of the fifteenth century, show arched niches terminating in a palmette similar to the kursy.⁴ There we find also as in our kursy both naturalistic and conventionalized ornament and the vase and tree



FIG. 1
KORAN-STAND OF CARVED WOOD
DATED 1360

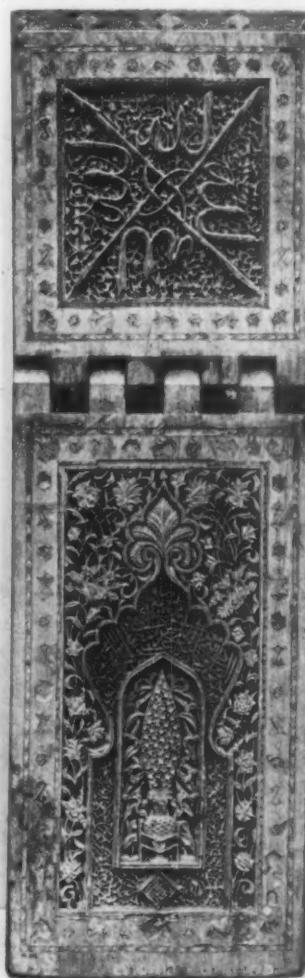


FIG. 2

teenth-century West Turkestan door is in the Museum and shows a more conventional style of the Persian school intermingled with characteristic elements of the local school. Two other doors in the mausoleum of Timur at Samarkand, probably of

motif. According to these analogies we may presume that our kursy was made either in West Turkestan by a Persian artist or in Persia itself but under strong Mongolian influence.

M. S. DIMAND.

*Martin, Thüren aus Turkestan, pls. 4-5.

A GROUP OF EARLY SILKS

A recent purchase has added to the Museum collection of textiles several important examples of early silks. Among these is a rare medallion dating from the sixth or seventh century of the Christian era and corresponding to the Coptic materials excavated in the cemeteries of Akhmim and Antinoë toward the close of the nineteenth century.

This piece, like one from Säkkingen preserved in the Kunstgewerbe Museum, Berlin, and another in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, has for its central motive two symmetrically placed Amazons mounted on prancing steeds, with bodies turned and arms upraised in the act of attacking two crouching beasts in the foreground. The pattern is woven in a light tan—once white or yellow—on a field of deep mauve that originally may have been Tyrian purple.

The exact provenance of these equestrian silks is a question that still interests archaeologists. Sidonius Apollinaris, a Persian scholar of the fifth century, describes the silks of his day as "stuffs on which, produced by a miracle of art, we behold the fierce Parthian with his head turned back on a prancing steed, now escaping, now returning to hurl his spear, by turns fleeing from and putting to flight wild animals whom he pursues," thus indicating a highly developed silk industry at a date when Sassanian sculptors were carving on the rocks of Takibostan scenes from the royal hunting grounds, and silversmiths were modeling regal plate designed with the same equestrian figures. And it is from these sources that the silks produced in the eastern Mediterranean section seem to have derived their inspiration.

Sir Aurel Stein with his discovery of figured silks dating from the first to the third century in the tomb of a Chinese *Castrum* in Chinese Turkestan a few years ago added another link to the chain of evidence proving not only the interrelation existing between Eastern peoples in the early Christian era, but as well the knowledge of a highly developed technique among Oriental weavers of the day. This knowledge of silk weaving gradually worked its way

westward and by the second half of the sixth century (about 570), during the reign of Chosroës I, it had become localized in different centers that in later centuries were noted for their fine carpets: Hamadan, Kashan, and Yezd famed for its embroideries and silks, and, farther west, Anatolia and Syria. Throughout this period the migration of patterns, with the dissemination of technique, continued its westward trend while communication was increasingly developed through war and commerce.

Thus the equestrian motive found in these silks, sometimes peopled with Amazons or again with royal hunters, may be traced from the borders of the Aegean to the Treasury of Nara in Japan, where in a figured silk bequeathed to this temple in 775 a similar archer on a mount caparisoned in the style of the Chinese pottery horses of the T'ang Dynasty (618-906) is found in a like pose, attacking a crouching beast as it endeavors to escape.

The Museum piece, identical—except for the omission of the pointed helmet—with the two pieces already cited as in the Berlin and London museums, would, according to the findings of von Falke, belong to the Alexandrian class in which he places the Berlin fragment. The late Alan Cole was inclined to consider these silks as of Syrian or Persian origin; von Falke, on the other hand, is of the opinion that the greater number were produced at Alexandria and Byzantium and identifies the work of each center by the variation in color and in the details of the design.

The theory that these Amazon pieces are from the workshops of Alexandria has much to recommend it. In this great center Greek, Roman, and Persian tradition met, and, combining with the native Egyptian, left a confused imprint on the weaves of the Upper Nile district. This is illustrated in the Museum medallion where the artist, though reverting to Greek tradition in the introduction of the Amazon figure with its bared breast, tight jacket, and laced boots, portrays features modeled after Coptic portraits, especially the large round eyes, adds to the costume the floating scarf or the pointed helmet, and mounts the figure on the chunky steed of the Sassanian type,

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framing the group in a circular band of leaf motives such as are found in the silk and woolen weaves of Antinoë and Akhmim.

The horse in the silks attributed to Byzantium, Syria, and Alexandria and in some of the Coptic tapestries is closely allied to the Chinese type already referred to, differing from the Greek model in the shape of the

the pattern—especially in the drawing of the faces—closely parallel the Coptic motives found in Akhmim silks, weaves which both Wulff and Dimand consider strongly influenced by Syria.

Another beautiful accession is a twelfth-century fragment, such as was exhibited by D^a Elena Espaⁿola Rodriguez in the Ex-



SILK MEDALLION, VI OR VII CENTURY

head and in the introduction of the tasseled trappings about the shoulders and haunches. In other instances where the horses are not elaborately caparisoned the animal is more slimly built, recalling the horses found in Egyptian battle scenes of the XIX Dynasty (about 1300 B.C.). In Persian silks of the period the horse takes on the form of a winged griffin.

But, whether of Byzantine, Alexandrian, or Syrian origin, the fact remains that in many of these equestrian silks details of

position of Madrid organized in 1917 by the Sociedad Espaⁿola de Amigos del Arte.¹ This piece has a pattern of roundels with heraldic beasts combined with the six-pointed star motive—which suggests Spanish rather than Italian origin; it is woven in dull red and tan with the heads of the animals worked in fine gold thread—possibly Cypriote.

¹Pedro Mg. de Artinano, *Catálogo de la Exposición Tejidos Espaⁿoles*, Madrid, n.d., pl. VII, no. 48.

Two other pieces illustrate thirteenth-century Spanish silks produced at Granada or Almeria during the Moorish period. One of these is a fragment from the cope of Felipe, son of San Fernando, preserved in the National Museum of Madrid; it is woven in tan and gold in a pattern of interlacing bands that form six-pointed stars enclosing a small roundel. A second fragment said once to have formed part of the cope in the Cathedral of Lérida, Madrid, of which several pieces have reached American collections, is the gift of Adolfo Loewi.²

This group of early silks will be placed on exhibition in the textile gallery (H 15) after they are withdrawn from the Room of Recent Accessions.

FRANCES MORRIS.

TWO ITALIAN MARRIAGE SALVERS

It was the custom among rich families in Italy

during the early Renaissance to offer gifts on a painted wooden platter at the time of a marriage or a birth. These platters or *deschi* were prepared panels such as the painters used for their pictures, of a circular or polygonal shape. They were decorated, often by foremost artists, with scenes appropriate to the occasion or to the taste of the recipients.

On one of these platters painted by Masaccio, now in the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin, one can see illustrated the manner of their use. Its subject is a visit to a young mother. One looks into the bedroom where she lies, the attendants and female relatives about her, the nurse holding the baby, and visitors outside the bed-

²de Artinano, op. cit., pls. VIII and IX, no. 51.

room door. The door leads into the open gallery of a courtyard where musicians with long trumpets play a serenade. They are followed by two youths carrying gifts; one has a basket but the other carries a round platter and on it, neatly arranged, small packages are placed.

The Italians of that period, secure in their enjoyment of beautiful and delicate things, were not concerned with the proprieties and correct principles of decorative art, and the salvers, at least those which

have come down to us, are frankly pictures. The Masaccio platter which we mention represents, for instance, the last word for its epoch in realistic painting. The *deschi da nozze* or marriage salvers which the Museum has just acquired¹ are not so realistic as the Masaccio, but only because he was the great realistic innovator and our pictures antedate his time and

style. Without doubt they are executed in the same manner as their artist would have executed independent pictures, and with no particular consideration for their purpose as a tray on which articles were to be carried. The salver was the precious and distinctive part of the gift and was treasured as a work of art and became a picture—an article of room decoration—after its single use as a platter. So they would be kept as pictures until they became old-fashioned litter, when they would be relegated to the storeroom or the rubbish heap; one is anguished at the thought of the number which must have been destroyed. But some have escaped the

¹Tempera on twelve-sided wooden panels. Both, 21 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. x 22 in. Rogers Fund, 1926. Room of Recent Accessions.



MARRIAGE SALVER
ITALIAN, XIV CENTURY

vicissitudes of fashion and the Museum is fortunate in securing these two examples of such an early time and in such good condition.

They are works of the latest phase of fourteenth-century Florentine painting, which lasted until the second quarter of the following century when it gave place to the newer style—the Renaissance style, so called, which was inaugurated by Masaccio and his fellows. They give an idea of the secular art of that earlier style, which was practised mostly as wall decorations in the palaces. Domestic decorations are generally short-lived. Younger generations prefer the latest fashion—the old stiff figures in funny clothes are apt to be painted over or else demolished in the alteration of living-rooms. Sacred pictures and church decorations, on the other hand, were protected by a

reverence for their subjects or for their associations, and fourteenth-century Italian art is known to us almost entirely from its religious side. Thus one of the functions of these panels is as a reminder that there was a joyous and playful aspect in the painting of those times as there was in its literature. No one could be more joyous and playful than Boccaccio! Though not precisely in his vein, one thinks instinctively of Boccaccio before these pictures which, like the interludes in the *Decameron*, celebrate the freshness and delight of country places.

It is likely that it will be found that particular stories are illustrated in these pictures. The hunting scene must be an illustration; else why should the figures all be ladies except for the one gentleman who

appears twice in this panel? He is the bridegroom, no doubt, as he is in the other panel as well, identifiable in each case by the same costume, according to the custom in narrative pictures where the same character is shown in various episodes. The bare feet of the lady in the other panel also point to a detail in a story. The hunting scene takes place in a mountainous country overlooking the sea-shore. Nine ladies are resting on a meadow or disporting themselves at a fountain of white marble and at the rivulet which flows from it. Two others leap across the rivulet and encourage their dogs as they run toward the bridegroom, who approaches them, the game he has killed strung from a stick he carries over his shoulder. He is seen again at the left hallooing to his dogs as he runs toward a boar set upon by ladies and dogs; at the ridge of a hill a lady lets fly an arrow at a

hare; a huntress pursues a deer up a steep mountain side. Over the summits one sees a plain with castles and on the sea-shore are tall towers. The sea is stormy and three ships with bellying sails are braving it. A sea and shore like this are found not infrequently in Florentine paintings of about 1500, and, by coincidence perhaps, the mountains resemble the mountains in Persian miniatures of about the same date as our paintings.

In the other panel the young couple (the bride does not appear in the hunting scene), attended by a lady in waiting, sit on a hill-side with two shepherds before them. One of the shepherds plays a pipe while the other with comical expression and gesture calls attention to the excellence of his friend's performance. The bride wears a



MARRIAGE SALVER
ITALIAN, XIV CENTURY

dress with a high flaring collar like the collar of the groom's doublet; like him she has aristocratic features and bearing in comparison with the other characters, particularly with the shepherds whose clodhopping attitudes are amusingly set down. The landscape is very handsome with its quaint

by him, also twelve-sided in shape, on which is a garden scene, is in the Lichtenstein Collection in Vienna.

BRYSON BURROUGHS.

MARTIN GUILLAUME BIENNAIS

Among the objects recently bequeathed to the Museum by the late James A. Scrymser is an interesting French lavabo (wash-stand) of the early nineteenth century. The workmanship of the lavabo (fig. 1) is of the finest quality and together with the elaborateness of the design makes it an exceptional piece. Everything about it points to the atelier of some one of the more reputed craftsmen of the day. Before attempting an attribution, however, let us look at the lavabo in detail.

It is in the form of a tripod (called in the period "athénienne") and is made of amboyna-wood and gilt-bronze. The legs are octagonal in section, tapering downward and curving gracefully outward at the extremities. The paw-feet are of gilt-bronze and have neckings of inverted leaves and simple mouldings. At the top the legs terminate in bunches of water-leaves with superimposed decoration of palmettes and cat-o'-nine-tails. Seated on the water-leaves are belligerent swans (fig. 3), their curved necks and wings supporting the upper of the two rims of the lavabo. The lower rim rests on the backs of the swans and is ornamented with beautifully chiseled sphinxes, urns, and laurel-leaves. A third of the way between the base and lower rim is a shelf of the same concave triangular shape as the base. At the corners of this shelf are dolphins and its edge has a frieze of confronting sea-horses and palmettes. The bowl, and the pitcher for which the shelf was intended are missing.

Fortunately there is in the Musée des Arts décoratifs a drawing¹ (fig. 2) of our identical lavabo. This drawing is inscribed in the lower margin (the inscription does not show in the photograph), "J'appartiens à Biennais," and belongs to the considerable



FIG. 1. WASH-STAND
BY BIENNAIS

summarizations of mountain forms and its sky of a solid and heavy red. Against this red sky two shields are painted with the armorial bearings of the families of the newly married couple, on one a dog rampant holding a sword, on the other a wolf on a mountain top.

The painter of these salvers is not known by name. He painted them between 1410 and 1425, one would say. Another salver

¹The writer is indebted to M. Louis Metman, Conservateur of the Musée des Arts décoratifs, for his trouble in having this drawing especially photographed for the Museum BULLETIN.

group of drawings in the Bibliothèque de l'Union centrale des Arts décoratifs originally made for Martin Guillaume Biennais, whose fame as a goldsmith was wide-spread in the days of the First Empire. The inscription is in the handwriting of Biennais. The drawing is otherwise unsigned. It is known, however, that Charles Percier furnished Biennais with many of his designs, and a comparison of this drawing with others known definitely to be by Percier warrants the conclusion that it is beyond doubt by him. It is meticulously and beautifully rendered in a thoroughly architectural fashion. An additional interest lies in that it supplies us with the design of the missing bowl and ewer, which would appear to have been intended for execution in gilt-bronze. Biennais was surprisingly accurate in his realization of the design, only three or four minor differences being noticeable.

Little has been written of the great goldsmiths and bronze-sculptors of the post-Revolutionary era, and Biennais is no exception. No monograph has so far been devoted to him, and although many writers mention him and rank him with Auguste, Thomire, and Odier, they rarely proffer even the most meager information about his life. Certain high spots are known, however, and from these we shall briefly follow through his career.

Born at Lacochère, near Argentan, April 29, 1764, Biennais was unheard of prior to the Revolution but had an established reputation by the year 1800. What happened to him in this brief interim? What was the secret of his success? The duc de Luynes in his *Rapport sur l'industrie des métaux précieux à l'Exposition de 1851* throws an interesting light on this. De Luynes says, "He was a maker of *nécessaires*² and *tablettierie*² when Bonaparte left on the expedition

² *Nécessaire*—a little box or case containing objects "necessary" to the toilet or to sewing, which could be conveniently carried on one's person. A *nécessaire de voyage* was a more elaborate type intended for use when traveling. *Tablettierie* may best be described as cabinet-work on a small scale. It comprised a large number of varied objects, invented by the taste of the day and changing with fashion. It included games, desk furniture, and boxes of various kinds, and involved the use of every sort of precious material.

to Egypt. The commander-in-chief could not pay the bill for the *nécessaire de voyage* that he had ordered from Biennais who gave him credit for it, and that was the source of his fortune." This must have been between April 12, 1798, when the Egyptian Expedition was authorized by the Directors,



FIG. 2. DRAWING OF WASH-STAND
BY PERCIER

and May 19 of the same year when it set sail. De Luynes continues, "Bonaparte, having become Emperor, ordered from him large amounts of furniture, *tablettierie*, and *nécessaires*, not only for himself but for all of his relatives. Encouraged by success and having hitherto executed his work with Génou, rue des Fossés-Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois, he now established an extensive manufactory of his own."

We next hear of him shortly before the battle of Marengo (June 14, 1800) when Jérôme Bonaparte bought "from M. Biennais, rue Saint-Honoré, at the sign of the Singe violet a magnificent *nécessaire de voyage*, as luxurious and elegant as could be invented, of gold, mother-of-pearl, silver, and ivory."³ Already he had moved to the Singe violet (Violet Monkey), 283 rue Saint-Honoré, where, so far as we know, he remained until the end of his career. The imperial insignia used by Napoleon at his coronation (Dec. 2, 1804) were made by Biennais and at the Exposition industrielle of 1806 he won a gold medal for

reads as follows: "Biennais, au 'Singe violet,' tient fabrique d'orfèvrerie, ébénisterie et tabletterie, rue Saint-Honoré, n° 283, Pots à oille, terrines, plats, assiettes, casseroles, salières, moutardiers, saucières, huiliers, boules à eau, seaux, cloches, dessous de bouteilles, étiquettes à vin, argent et vermeil, émaillées, porte-liqueur, grille à pain, porte-roti et généralement tout ce qui concerne le service de table, tout en vermeil, seringue, bassinoire et généralement tout se traite à l'orfèvrerie, le tout ciselé d'après l'antique et aux ornements étrusques. Tabatières d'or et d'argent, porte-crayon, etc."



FIG. 3. DETAIL OF WASH-STAND

the objects he exhibited, among these a richly decorated soup-tureen designed by Percier and Fontaine for the Empress Josephine. Obviously he had become firmly ensconced in the imperial favor, and it is not surprising that in the same year (1806) he was appointed goldsmith to the Emperor.

Orfèvre de S. M. l'Empereur et Roi—thus reads his trade-card⁴ (fig. 4) henceforth until the fall of the Empire. Another trade-card⁵ of this period, in the possession of the Bibliothèque de l'Union centrale des Arts décoratifs, is interesting for giving a list of some of the objects made by Biennais. It

³Mémoires de la duchesse d'Abrantès, vol. III, p. 397.

⁴This trade-card is reproduced from Henri Bouilhet, *L'Orfèvrerie française aux XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles*, vol. II, p. 75.

⁵The writer recalls having seen one of these in the Musée Carnavalet.

There is no mention of gilt-bronze in the above list but the inclusion of *ébénisterie* (cabinet-work), which at this period was rarely without gilt-bronze mounts, is in itself good reason to believe that *bronze doré* may have been produced at the Singe violet. Goldsmiths having extensive establishments like that of Biennais often employed bronze-sculptors, the best-known instance of this association being that of Odiot and Thomire. There is little doubt in the writer's mind that our lavabo emanated in toto from the workshop in the rue Saint-Honoré. Bouilhet says⁶ that Biennais was first of all a cabinet-maker (*de son premier métier ébéniste*) and we know several instances of makers of luxurious furniture who produced their own bronzes: witness the case of Jacob-Desmalter.⁷

There is, unfortunately, not available

⁶Henri Bouilhet, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 88.

⁷Hector Lefuel, *Jacob-Desmalter*, p. 104.

space to enumerate the many objects made by Biennais for the Emperor and his family. We may note, however, the altar made in 1810 for the marriage ceremony with Marie-Louise and, what is more interesting than important, a clock made in 1814 from a model furnished by Auguste Garneray and intended for Josephine, then living in retirement at Malmaison. Under the *Restauration* Biennais executed a chalice and ciborium for the Emperor of Russia, and at the Exposition industrielle of 1819 he ex-

To return to the lavabo, it would be too much to assume that the piece was necessarily executed for the Emperor. Napoleon was not Biennais' only patron and although the character of the piece is such that it might well have been made for some one of the imperial family, yet there is no definite proof to that effect. There were many other people in Paris at the time who could also have afforded as expensive a piece. Although the swan is often associated with Josephine and undoubtedly does occur on



FIG. 4. TRADE-CARD OF BIENNAIS

hibited a great vase in silver-gilt which the Russian army presented to General Woronoff. On the latter occasion the chairman of the jury of the exposition, M. Héricart de Thury, said of Biennais, "Il s'est fait distinguer pendant de vingt ans par tout ce qu'il y a de plus parfait en orfèvrerie."⁸ He did not exhibit in 1823 but was still in business in 1832 when the duchesse d'Abrantès published volume four of her *Mémoires*, for she mentions having recently seen in his shop "tout ce qu'il y a de plus élégant en tabletterie."⁹ He died on March 26, 1843.

⁸"He has distinguished himself for some twenty years by all that is most perfect in goldsmith's work." Paul Mantz, *Recherches sur l'histoire de l'orfèvrerie française*, *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, vol. XIV (1863), p. 247.

⁹"Everything that is most elegant in tabletterie."

furniture made for her, yet it was also used generally throughout the Empire period as a graceful motif of decoration. Regardless of its provenance the association of Percier and Biennais with the lavabo¹⁰ invests it with an unusual significance.

It is not, however, the only piece of furniture by Biennais belonging to the Museum. In the bequest of Collis P. Huntington is a mahogany coin-cabinet (fig. 5) in the form of an Egyptian pylon with silver inlay and mountings. This was briefly described in the BULLETIN for September, 1926. The silver ornament inlaid into the side panels of the cabinet includes uraei whose bodies drop forward to reveal hidden locks which open the ends of the cabinet. The faces of these locks are inscribed "Bien-

¹⁰Exhibited in Alcove I, Gallery Jo.

nais." The ends of the cabinet contain series of shallow drawers (fig. 5) each of which is decorated with a Napoleonic bee.¹¹ One wing of each bee is hinged and serves as a drawer pull. The silverwork is finely executed and the naïve pseudo-Egyptian design is most entertaining. The cabinet was intended to receive coins, medals, or other valued minutiae, and could in addition be used as a sort of table or pedestal. In the case of the lavabo we know the designer, Charles Percier—altogether too famous a person to require detailed information. For the cabinet, however, we possess no design, and the field is therefore open for an attribution.

It will be recalled that a large number of scientists, artists, and littérateurs accompanied Napoleon on his expedition in 1798 to Egypt. Included in this group, which the army was wont to consider intellectual parasites, was the baron Dominique de Vivant-Denon. Born in 1747 Denon started out to study law but at an early age gave up that profession for art and literature. His charming manners and brilliant conversational powers soon made him many powerful friends. Louis XV intrusted him with the collection and arrangement of a cabinet of medals and gems for Madame de Pompadour and later appointed him attaché to the French embassy in St. Petersburg. He then held successively diplomatic posts in Sweden, Switzerland,

and Naples. He was proscribed at the time of the Revolution but returned to Paris from Switzerland and was saved only through the intervention of the painter David. Later he was one of a band of eminent men who frequented the house of Madame de Beauharnais (Josephine) and it was there that he met Napoleon, whose firm friend he henceforth remained. He was invited to join the Egyptian Expedition and while in Egypt obtained the data for his great work, the *Voyage dans la basse et la haute Égypte*, published in 1802. In 1804 Napoleon made him director-general of museums, which office he held until the *Restauration* in 1815. He died in 1825.

Denon is known to have tried his hand several times at designing furniture. He collaborated with Percier and Fontaine, and David on designs for three "grands meubles"¹² for the

cabinet of the Emperor at the Tuilleries, and Jacob-Desmalter executed for him a number of pieces of furniture¹³ of his own design and for his own house. Both Egyptian ornament and silver inlay figure in this furniture. It is very likely that Denon, considering his intimacy with the Emperor, designed this coin-cabinet for him. It is also probable that Biennais, although his name appears only on the silverwork, made the entire piece.¹⁴

PRESTON REMINGTON.

¹¹Hector Lefuel, op. cit., p. 430.

¹²Ibid., pp. 30 and 31.

¹⁴Exhibited in Alcove I, Gallery J9.

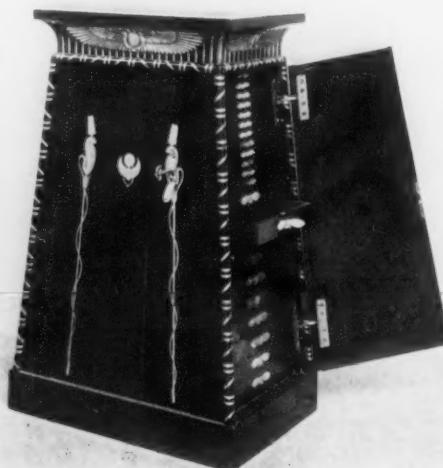


FIG. 5. COIN-CABINET WITH SILVER INLAY
BY BIENNAIS

¹¹The cabinet is reputed to have belonged to Napoleon.

NOTES

THE PHOTOGRAPH DIVISION of the Library is now displaying photographs of paintings showing musical scenes.

ASSOCIATION MEETINGS. The eighteenth annual convention of the American Federation of Art will be held this year in Boston from May 18 to 20. The American Association of Museums will meet in Washington, D. C., from May 23 to May 25.

APPOINTMENTS AT THE CLOISTERS. The Museum Instructors will meet visitors at The Cloisters on Wednesdays, April 6 to May 25, at 3 o'clock according to the following schedule: April 6, Mrs. Carey; April 13, Miss Abbot; April 20, Mrs. Carey; April 27, Miss Abbot; May 4, Mrs. Carey; May 11, Miss Abbot; May 18, Miss Abbot; May 25, Mrs. Carey. This service is free to Members and to teachers in the public schools of New York City; to others there will be the usual charge of 25 cents for each person with a minimum fee of \$1 for the group.

A SERIES OF GALLERY VISITS FOR MEMBERS. The meeting of groups of Members by Miss Marshall on Mondays at 11 a. m. and Fridays at 3 p. m. has been discontinued and in its place she is conducting for Members a series of gallery visits illustrating the history of art, at 11 o'clock on Monday mornings during April and May. Especial emphasis is laid on those collections and objects for which the Museum is distinguished. The subjects for the last two weeks in April and for May are as follows: April 18, Byzantine and Romanesque Art; April 25, Gothic Art and Life; May 2, Gothic Art and Life; May 9, Renaissance Sculpture; May 16, Renaissance Painting; May 23, Art of the High Renaissance and Baroque Periods.

Miss Marshall will continue to be in readiness to meet Members at the Museum with or without previous appointment and at The Cloisters by previous arrangement.

A LOAN OF NEAR EASTERN MINIATURE PAINTINGS. The Museum is fortunate in having as a loan twenty-seven Persian, Turkish, and Indian miniatures belonging to V. Everit Macy, now exhibited in Gallery H 20. Among the important miniatures of an early period are a leaf from a *Materia Medica* dated 1222 A.D., a leaf from



FIG. 1. A SULTAN AND HIS COURTIERS
PERSIAN, EARLY XIV CENTURY

an animal book, *Manafi el Hajawan*, of the end of the thirteenth century, and an early fourteenth-century painting of the Mongolian school (fig. 1), showing the Sultan on his throne among his courtiers. A noteworthy example of the Behzad school is painted on silk, a material seldom used in Persian miniatures. Several miniatures are of the beginning of the sixteenth century and characteristic examples of the Herat school. To the developed style of Persian sixteenth-century miniature painting belong the portraits of youths playing instruments, drinking, or holding flowers. A portrait of the end of the sixteenth century is seen in figure 2. Three miniatures show the so-called Indo-Persian style character-

istic of the time of the Mughal emperor, Akbar the Great (1556-1605). An interesting leaf of an album, probably of the Yahangir period, shows a prince holding a hawk, bordered by smaller figures and plants. A Persian miniature of the seventeenth century bears the date 1082 A. H. (1671 A. D.) and a signature of the painter Muin Musawwar.

M. S. D.



FIG. 2. A YOUTH DOCTORING HIMSELF
PERSIAN, END OF XVI CENTURY

MEMBERSHIP. At a meeting of the Board of Trustees, held March 21, 1927, the following persons, having qualified, were elected in their respective classes:

FELLOWS FOR LIFE, Henry Edwards Huntington, Frederic R. Stettenheim.

SUSTAINING MEMBERS, Mrs. William L. Bull, Mrs. J. Henry Dick, Mrs. L. G. Gardner, Mrs. Charles Lanier Lawrence, Mrs. Frederick G. Le Roy, Miss Margaret B. Levey, Mrs. William Lilly, Mrs. Jacob Vandeer Litt, Mrs. Francis G. Lloyd, Mrs. Robert McAllister Lloyd, Mrs. Eugene

Maupai, Mrs. George A. P. Oliver, Mrs. H. R. Ryder, Mrs. Charles E. Sheppard, Mrs. John M. Tuttle, Mrs. Alexander Tison.

ANNUAL MEMBERS were elected to the number of 148.

CHANGES IN THE AMERICAN WING. Within the last few months a number of small changes have been made in the various rooms of the American Wing. Many friends of the Museum have lent from their collections single objects or groups of objects which it is the privilege of the public to see while they are on view in the Museum. A number of acquisitions by gift and purchase have also been placed on exhibition. For the convenience of those visitors who wish to find the objects which have been installed more or less recently, a brief summary of the more important of these is given.

The two galleries which lead from the north end of the Pierpont Morgan Wing to the American Wing have not been changed in their arrangement, the only new exhibits here being the fine early nineteenth-century piano-case and trestle by Duncan Phyfe, action by Gibson and Davis, New York, and a collection of Chinese Lowestoft

On the second floor in the main gallery should be noted two unusual side-chairs in the Chippendale style, and in the room to the west, which came from the estate called Almodington on the eastern shore of Maryland, a rare gilded and carved looking-glass of the second quarter of the eighteenth century, a recent purchase. One of the most unusual pieces of furniture of American provenance is in this room—a wing-chair with maple frame, covered with its original needlework, which probably dates from early in the second quarter of the eighteenth century. In the ballroom from Alexandria, Virginia, two portraits by Gilbert Stuart have been hung. One of them is a portrait of Colonel Charles Pettit, the other a small self-portrait, a recent purchase. On the pier-table against the north wall two silver candlesticks made by G. Forbes which formerly belonged to Chief Justice John Jay stand under his portrait by Stuart. In the next room, which came from Marmon, King George County, Vir-

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ginia, an old embroidery frame with tripod base has been set up. In the room from the Powel house, Philadelphia, may be seen three pieces of Chinese Lowestoft which formed part of the dinner service of William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, the gift of George Crawley.

On the first floor will be noted more changes and additions than on the two upper floors. In the main gallery on this floor a number of fine examples of Duncan Phyfe furniture have been placed. In the alcove opposite the stairway are some pieces of painted furniture and a tall clock of New York make. On the Sheraton mixing-table in the room from Baltimore there is a group of Baltimore silver, the gift of Samuel Kirk and Son. It is the handiwork of Samuel Kirk and of Samuel Kirk and Son and is of the early part of the nineteenth century. A set of six Sheraton style side-chairs, about the table, are recent purchases.

The room from Petersburg, Virginia, contains many new objects. Over the mantelpiece is hung a fine small portrait of James

Kirk Paulding by John Vanderlyn, and several chairs, a gaming table, chess-board, and ivory chessmen give variety to the appointments of the room. A gilt-bronze clock with the figure of Washington is the gift of Miss Julia Yard.

In the room from Haverhill which is fitted up as a bedroom a clock and a few pieces of furniture have been placed. One of them is a tambour desk of satinwood bearing the label of John Seymour and Son, Boston. For the room dedicated to the memory of Charles Allen Munn has been lent a rare sideboard inlaid with medallions of the American eagle. On it have been placed four pieces of a silver tea-set which was the gift of George Washington to his adopted daughter, Eleanor Parke Custis, on the occasion of her marriage to Lawrence Lewis in February, 1799.

In most of the rooms, slight rearrangements and adjustments have been made, although in general the character of none of the rooms or galleries has been changed.

C. O. C.

LIST OF ACCESSIONS AND LOANS

MARCH, 1927

ARMS AND ARMOR

Pitch lance, chain mail sleeves, XVI cent.*; pitch pan, XVII cent.*; lance for carrousel, abt. 1700,*—Austrian; spontoon-partisan, XVII cent.*; State halberd of Charles VI, early XVIII cent.*—German.

Purchase.

CERAMICS

Bowls (2), glazed porcelain, Chinese, modern (Wing H, Study Room).

Gift of Yamanaka & Co.

DRAWINGS

Wash drawing, Man on Horseback, Austrian, XVII cent.*

Purchase.

Portraits (2): Albert Bridges and Mrs. Albert Bridges, both by Henry Inman, American, 1801 (?)—1846 (Floor II, Room 31A).

Bequest of Mrs. Eliza K. DeLamater.

MEDALS, PLAQUES, ETC.

Bronze medal, Mining Science Bringing Ore to Light, by William Lawrence Saunders, American, contemporary.*

Gift of William Lawrence Saunders.

*Not yet placed on exhibition.

†Recent Acquisitions Room (Floor I, Room 8).

METALWORK

Money-weight, bronze inlaid with silver, Byzantine, VI cent.†

Gift of Dr. R. Meyer Riefstahl.

Pieces of silver (11): paten, maker, S. W., 1724†; two-handled cup, maker, John Swift, 1760,†—English (London); porringer, maker, Peter Van Dyck, 1684—1750†; tankard, maker, Henricus Boelen, 1607—1755†; tankard, maker, John Hastier†; tankard, maker, Simeon Soumainet†; mug, maker, Koenraet Ten Eyck, early XVIII cent.†; chocolate pot, maker, John Moulinar, middle of XVIII cent.†; creamer, maker, Daniel Van Voorhis, late XVIII cent.†; paten, maker unknown, XVIII cent.†; college cup with cover, makers, Cooper and Fisher, early XIX cent.†—American (New York).

Gift of Miss Annie Clarkson.

MINIATURES AND MANUSCRIPTS

Miniature: Portrait of Eliza K. Kimball, artist unknown, American, abt. 1835—1836.*

Bequest of Mrs. Eliza K. DeLamater.

MISCELLANEOUS

Candles (4), hand-dipped, American, last quarter of XVIII cent.*

Gift of John Howard Benson.

BULLETIN OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

Panel of wallpaper, French, early XIX cent.*
Gift of Mrs. Kate Upson Clark.

PAINTINGS
 Water-color, Tunny Boats, by Hayley Lever,
 American, contemporary.†
Gift of Mrs. H. L. May.

Ex-voto painting taken from the Tun Huang
 walled-up grotto, Chinese, IX-X cent. (Wing E.,
 Room 10).

Purchase.

The Wyndham Sisters, by John Singer Sargent,
 American, 1856-1925 (Floor II, Room 12).

Purchase.

SCULPTURE

Bronze statue, The Vine, by Harriet W. Frishmuth, contemporary*; bronze relief, Recumbent Figure, by Frank Duveneck, 1848-1919*; bronze statue, Sophocles, by John Donoghue, 1853-1903,*—American.

Purchase.

TEXTILES

Fragment of silk, Egyptian or Syrian, VI-VII
 cent.†; fragment of silk and gold, Italian (Si-
 cilian), XIII cent.†; fragment of vestment,
 Spanish (Almeria), XIII cent.†; pieces (3) of toile
 de Jouy, French, XVIII cent.*

Purchase.

WOODWORK AND FURNITURE

Wood-carving, Egypto-Arabic, IX cent.†
Anonymous Gift.

Cassone front, Italian (Florentine), XIV cent.†
Purchase.

Chairs (2), English, period of Charles II, 1660-
 1685.†

Gift of Embury Palmer.

*Not yet placed on exhibition.

†Recent Accessions Room (Floor I, Room 8).

Tea box, mahogany, with containers (6), made
 by Thomas Streatfeil Clarkson, early XIX cent.†

Gift of Miss Annie Clarkson.
 Armchairs (2), carved and gilded, French, middle
 of XIX cent. (Wing J, Room 9).

Gift of Mrs. Morris Hawkes.

CERAMICS

Vase, Chinese, T'ang dyn. (618-906 A. D.)
 (Wing H, Room 12).

Lent by Mrs. Samuel T. Peters.

Pieces (58) of Sino-Lowestoft porcelain, Chinese,
 second half of XVIII cent. (American Wing).

Lent by Edward A. and Frank Crowninshield.
 Cup, mug, plate, and saucer, with the Insignia of
 the Order of the Cincinnati, Sino-Lowestoft por-
 celain, Chinese, late XVIII cent. (American
 Wing).

Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Pierre Jay.

PAINTINGS

Portrait of Queen Mariana of Austria, by Diego
 Rodriguez de Silva y Velazquez, Spanish, 1599-
 1660 (Floor II, Room 29).

Lent by Harry Payne Bingham.

Portraits (2): Lynde Catlin and Mrs. Lynde
 Catlin, both by James Sharples, 1751-1811
 (Floor II, Room 31a); portrait of James Kirke
 Paulding, by John Vanderlyn, 1776-1852 (Ameri-
 can Wing); portrait of Commodore Macdonough,
 by Joseph Wood, abt. 1778-1852 (Floor II,
 Room 31a),—American.

Lent by Mrs. W. Murray Crane.

Portrait of Augustus Jay, and Portrait of Anna
 Marie Bayard (Mrs. Augustus Jay), artist un-
 known, American, second quarter of XVIII cent.*

Lent by Mr. and Mrs. Pierre Jay.

WOODWORK AND FURNITURE

Chair, mahogany, American (Philadelphia),
 second quarter of XVIII cent. (American Wing).

Lent by Grant Brown.

Wing-chair, walnut and needlework, American,
 second quarter of XVIII cent. (American Wing).

Lent by Mrs. J. Insley Blair.

CALENDAR OF LECTURES FREE LECTURES

APRIL 19-MAY 15, 1927

		HOUR
April		
19	Tapestries of the Gothic Period (Gallery Talk for Members) <i>Edith R. Abbot.</i>	5:00
26	Problems which the Early Italian Painters Had to Solve (Gallery Talk for Members) <i>Edith R. Abbot.</i>	5:00
May		
3	Flemish Painting Before and After the Reformation (Gallery Talk for Members) <i>Hetty Vincent Marshall.</i>	5:00
10	Oriental Rugs (Gallery Talk for Members) <i>Elise P. Carey.</i>	5:00
14	Story-Hours for Boys and Girls by Anna Curtis Chandler, Saturdays, April 23 and 30, May 7 and 14, at 1:45 p. m.; Sundays, April 24 and May 1, 8, and 15, at 1:45 and 2:45 p. m.; for Members' Children, Saturday, April 24, at 10:15 a. m.	
	Study-Hour for Practical Workers, by Grace Cornell, Sunday, April 24, at 3 p. m.	

LECTURES FOR WHICH FEES ARE CHARGED

APRIL 19—MAY 14, 1927

In this calendar, M indicates that the course is given by the Museum, N that it is given by New York University.

A. D.)	April	HOUR	May	HOUR
Peters.	19 Spanish Painting (N) A. Philip McMahon.....	11:00	2 Museum Course for High School Teachers (M) Ethelwyn Bradish.....	4:00
Chinese.	19 Introduction to the History of Art (N) Herbert Richard Cross.....	8:00	3 Spanish Painting (N) A. Philip McMahon.....	11:00
Wing).	20 History of Florentine Painting (N) Richard Offner.....	11:00	3 Introduction to the History of Art (N) Herbert Richard Cross.....	8:00
nsfield.	21 General Outline of the History of Art (N) Richard Offner.....	3:00	4 History of Florentine Painting (N) Richard Offner.....	11:00
ignia of	22 Modern French Art (N) Walter Pach.....	11:00	5 General Outline of the History of Art (N) Richard Offner.....	3:00
soft por-	22 Study-Hour for Teachers (M) Edith R. Abbot.....	4:00	6 Modern French Art (N) Walter Pach.....	11:00
american	22 Fundamentals of Interior Decoration (N) Evan J. Tudor.....	8:00	6 Study-Hour for Teachers (M) Grace Cornell.....	4:00
re Jay.	23 Greek and Roman Art (N) David M. Robinson.....	10:00	6 Fundamentals of Interior Decoration (N) Evan J. Tudor.....	8:00
Diego	23 Outline of the History of Painting (M) Edith R. Abbot.....	11:00	7 Greek and Roman Art (N) David M. Robinson.....	10:00
1599—	23 Italian Renaissance Painting (N) Richard Offner.....	11:00	7 Outline of the History of Painting (M) Edith R. Abbot.....	11:00
ngham.	25 Museum Course for High School Teachers (M) Ethelwyn Bradish.....	4:00	7 Italian Renaissance Painting (N) Richard Offner.....	11:00
Lynde	26 Spanish Painting (N) A. Philip McMahon.....	11:00	9 Museum Course for High School Teachers (M) Ethelwyn Bradish.....	4:00
1-1811	26 Introduction to the History of Art (N) Herbert Richard Cross.....	8:00	10 Spanish Painting (N) A. Philip McMahon.....	11:00
Kirke	27 History of Florentine Painting (N) Richard Offner.....	11:00	10 Introduction to the History of Art (N) Herbert Richard Cross.....	8:00
Ameri-	28 General Outline of the History of Art (N) A. Philip McMahon.....	3:00	11 History of Florentine Painting (N) Richard Offner.....	11:00
ough,	29 Modern French Art (N) Walter Pach.....	11:00	12 General Outline of the History of Art (N) Walter Pach.....	3:00
oor II.	29 Study-Hours for Teachers (M) Kate Mann Franklin, Grace Cor- nell, Anna Lamont Rogers.....	4:00	13 Modern French Art (N) Walter Pach.....	11:00
Crane.	29 Fundamentals of Interior Decoration (N) Evan J. Tudor.....	8:00	13 Study-Hours for Teachers (M) Kate Mann Franklin, Grace Cor- nell, Agnes Houston Craig.....	4:00
of Anna	30 Greek and Roman Art (N) David M. Robinson.....	10:00	13 Fundamentals of Interior Decoration (N) Evan J. Tudor.....	8:00
ist un-	30 Outline of the History of Painting (M) Edith R. Abbot.....	11:00	14 Greek and Roman Art (N) David M. Robinson.....	10:00
cent.*	30 Italian Renaissance Painting (N) Richard Offner.....	11:00	14 Outline of the History of Painting (M) Edith R. Abbot.....	11:00
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THE BULLETIN OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

PUBLISHED MONTHLY UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, FIFTH AVENUE AND EIGHTY-SECOND STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y. SUBSCRIPTION PRICE, TWO DOLLARS A YEAR, SINGLE COPIES TWENTY CENTS. SENT TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE MUSEUM WITHOUT CHARGE.

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ADMISSION

The Museum, including its branch, The Cloisters, 698 Fort Washington Avenue, is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday until 6 p.m.; Sunday from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.

On Monday and Friday an admission fee of 25 cents is charged to all except members and holders of complimentary tickets.

Members are admitted on pay days on presentation of their tickets. Persons holding members' complimentary tickets are entitled to one admittance on a pay day.

MUSEUM INSTRUCTORS

Visitors desiring special direction or assistance in studying the collections of the Museum may secure the services of members of the staff on application to the Director of Educational Work. An appointment should preferably be made in advance.

This service is free to members and to teachers in the public schools of New York City, as well as to pupils under their guidance. To all others a charge of \$1 an hour is made with an additional fee of 25 cents for each person in a group exceeding four in number.

PRIVILEGES TO STUDENTS

For special privileges extended to teachers, pupils, and art students; and for use of the Library, classrooms, study rooms, lending collections, and collections in the Museum, see special leaflet.

Requests for permits to copy and to photograph in the Museum should be addressed to the Secretary. No permits are necessary for sketching and for taking snapshots with hand cameras. Permits are issued for all days except Saturday afternoons, Sundays, and legal holidays. For further information, see special leaflet.

PUBLICATIONS

CATALOGUES published by the Museum, PHOTOGRAPHS of all objects belonging to the Museum, COLOR PRINTS, ETCHINGS, and CASTS are on sale at the Fifth Avenue entrance. Lists will be sent on application. Orders by mail may be addressed to the Secretary.

CAFETERIA

A cafeteria located in the basement of the building is open on week-days from 12 m. to 4:45 p.m., Sundays from 1 to 5:15 p.m.

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

THE PORTRAIT OF ALFONSO D'ESTE

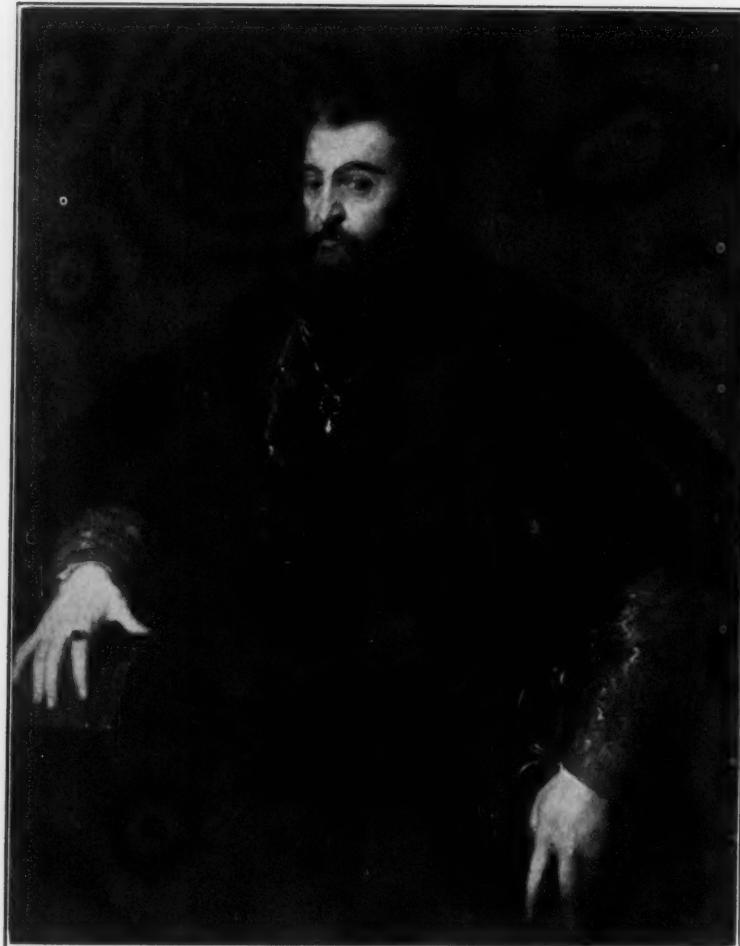
BY

TITIAN

NEW YORK

1927





PORTRAIT OF ALFONSO D'ESTE
BY TITIAN

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THE PORTRAIT OF ALFONSO D'ESTE BY TITIAN

Titian is known to have made two portraits of Duke Alfonso I of Ferrara. The date of the first may be surmised from old documents as about 1523-1525, shortly after the artist had completed his celebrated series of paintings for the Duke's *Studio* in the Ferrara castle—The Feast of Venus and The Bacchanal now in the Prado at Madrid and the Bacchus and Ariadne of the London National Gallery. Giovanni Bellini's Banquet of the Gods—the picture which Titian finished (at present belonging to Joseph E. Widener)—hung in the same room, where also Titian's The Tribute Money, of the Dresden Museum, was set into the woodwork of a door. Alfonso was Titian's earliest princely patron.

There is an uncertainty about the year of Titian's birth. On his own testimony in a dunning letter of 1571 to Philip II of Spain, he was then "an old man of ninety-five," but he was possibly exaggerating in order to stimulate the tardy generosity of that monarch. Many contemporaneous references make it reasonable to conclude that he was younger by ten years or even more than he claimed.¹ According to the generally accepted opinion on the subject Titian would have been in his late thirties at the date which we place as the time the Duke first sat to him.

The portrait was a famous work. Titian himself pointed it out to the Emperor Charles V as one of the finest pictures by him in the possession of Alfonso, and it won the praise of the most uncompromising critic and greatest genius of all Italy. Michelangelo had been made overseer and designer of the defenses of Florence when that city was in revolt against the Medici dukes and was expecting a siege by the combined armies of the Pope and Charles V, and was sent on a tour of investigation of modern fortifications. While at Ferrara on this mission in 1529 he was entertained by the Duke, and escorted over the palace.

¹See Herbert Cook in *The Nineteenth Century*, January, 1902, and in his *Giorgione*. Dr. Gronau, *Repertorium für Kunsthissenschaft*, vols. XXIV and XXV, holds to the earlier date.

The likeness of Alfonso by Titian Michelangelo commended among all the treasures which were shown him. Alfonso, himself no mean connoisseur, valued this picture particularly and was loath to part with it when the exigencies of politics demanded that he do so in order to secure the good will of the Emperor by a gift of pictures.

For all his wealth and military genius the Duke's position was precarious and only to be maintained by vigilant and adroit statesmanship—by quick shifts in alliances with the great powers that then made Italy their battle-ground. His city of Ferrara was peculiarly exposed to foreign attack and relied for its safety on its matchless fortifications and on the military and political skill of its rulers. The Ferrarese dukes were often forced to unpleasant expedients. For political purposes Ercole I had married Alfonso, his son and heir, to a beautiful widow of several husbands, the daughter of Pope Alexander VI, Lucrezia Borgia. Whatever the justness of her reputation, the event turned out happily, for she seems to have led a blameless life as his wife throughout the rest of her days.

The circumstances which forced Alfonso to part with his portrait were of long preparation but came to a climax in 1530 when Charles V, allied to Pope Clement VII, with all Italy at his feet, was crowned Emperor. Charles had himself made arbiter of an old dispute over the cities of Modena and Reggio, between the Duchy of Ferrara and the Papal States, and Alfonso was constrained to gain his good will. Pictures were the most effective bribes with the Emperor, and Covos, the Imperial Secretary, had prepared a little list of Titians belonging to the Duke, the gift of which would be productive of the best results; there was a portrait of the Emperor, the portrait of the Duke himself which Titian had spoken of, and the portrait of Ercole, Alfonso's son. At the negotiations which followed, Covos was imperative that whatever else might be chosen, the portrait of Alfonso should be included in the gift. In vain the Ferrarese agents urged that the portrait was an old one, no longer a resemblance, and that an up-to-date likeness would be preferable. Covos insisted on the

original, as Titian had said that it was very fine. Alfonso was forced to give in. The picture was delivered into the Secretary's hands and in January, 1533, it was hanging in the Emperor's room at Bologna.²

To replace the portrait lost to him by the wiles of Covos, Alfonso commissioned Titian to paint a replica and directed that the new picture show him wearing the French order of Saint-Michel, a distinction received not long before from Francis I. The insignia of the order was sent to Venice and lent to Titian so that its representation should be correct. When Alfonso died in 1534 this second portrait was unfinished. It was received two years later by Ercole II and placed in the Ferrara palace. Vasari saw it there and in the first edition of the *Lives*, in 1550, describes it, "with an arm resting on a large cannon." Alfonso was proud of his cannon foundry, the most prominent in the world at his time. One of his cannon is famous to this day. When the Bolognese revolted against Pope Julius II and demolished Michelangelo's bronze statue of the Pope from over the city gate, it was Alfonso who received the fragments of the statue and cast them into a cannon which he named the Julia and placed on the platform of the castle at Ferrara.

Titian's second portrait was long supposed to be the picture in the Pitti Palace at Florence, which complies with the old descriptions; it shows Alfonso wearing the order of Saint-Michel and with his hand resting on a cannon. The more scrupulous connoisseurship of recent times, however, has decided that this painting is a copy after Titian and it is now labeled Dosso Dossi. There can be no doubt that this copy reproduces the general aspect and composition of Titian's second portrait even though the picture by his own hand has disappeared.

We hear of the first portrait for the last time in Italian documents as hanging in the Emperor's room in Bologna in 1533. It was carried into Spain and is mentioned

²The facts given above and those concerning the history of the second portrait, which follow, are related, with references to the documents, in Campori, *Tiziano e gli Estensi*.

in seventeenth-century inventories (1666 and 1686) as having been placed in the south gallery of the castle at Madrid, although it is there referred to as the "Duke of Urbino with his hand on a cannon." Mistakes in names are common in old inventories and the item of the cannon makes it certain that the portrait thus described represented Alfonso d'Este.

At this point all record of the picture disappears. It has been supposed, but without any quotations from documents, that Titian's portrait of Alfonso was one of the works destroyed by fire at the conflagration of the castle in the eighteenth century. The supposition has often been repeated pretty much as an accepted fact.

The painting which is now shown in the Room of Recent Accessions is the portrait of Alfonso.³ That it is the work of Titian, all the critics who have seen it, with remarkable and unusual accord, agree. The noble design is his invention, and no one but he could have carried out in this rich and lustrous color such subtleties of detail, combined with breadth and solidity of form. Examine it close to and note these subtleties—the unevenness of the skin; the differences in the texture of the flesh, how here it sags and there it is drawn taut over the bones; the folds about the eyes; the slightly swollen lids, somewhat bloodshot; the inhaling nostrils; the puffy lower lip; even separate hairs of the beard are drawn out, and the hair, loosely combed off the forehead, would wave gently if blown on. Then move away and see how these fine distinctions disappear in the solidity and rotundity of the head marked boldly by only the most conspicuous and characteristic forms of the features. Notice too the great mass of the body to which the delicate sheen of the velvet folds and the pattern of the brocaded sleeves are entirely subservient. Observe also the splendid prehensibility of the hands, one resting ele-

³Oil on canvas; h. 50 $\frac{1}{2}$; w. 38 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Purchase, 1927. When sufficient income for the purpose shall have been received from the estate of the late Frank A. Munsey it is the intention of the Trustees of the Museum to assign the portrait to his bequest "as a worthy first purchase from that benefaction, without which they would have hardly felt at liberty to buy this important picture."

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gantly on the smooth bronze of the cannon, the other, its strength in repose for the moment, holding the sword-scabbard lightly at his thigh. Only Titian could have painted the deep crimson velvet of the doublet, the soft fur of the collar, the liquid blue of the sapphire, and the glint of the pendent pearl on his chest. Surely our picture is one of his great achievements!

The careful rendering of its precise details places the work early in Titian's full development, not far from the time of the *Bacchus* and *Ariadne* executed for the Duke's *Studio*, which shows a similar character of finish. As has been pointed out, that work can be dated about 1523, and the statement is warranted that our portrait was finished shortly after that date. Alfonso was about forty-seven at this time and in the portrait he may be no older than forty-seven, although from the evidence of looks in our own more tranquil lives he might be judged so.

Besides its evident superiority and its different handling our picture differs from the copy of the second portrait in the Pitti in several respects.⁴ The Duke is younger in our work by eight or ten years, one would say; he is in an easier and more commanding posture; the placing of the hands and their direction make a more flowing line in the composition; and lastly—an important fact for its identification—he wears a jewel hanging from a delicate gold chain about his neck and not the order of Saint-Michel. It is thus definitely proved that ours is not Titian's second portrait from which the picture in the Pitti was copied. Indeed, all the facts point to the astonishing conclusion that ours must be none other than Titian's first portrait of Alfonso—the picture which Titian himself considered one of his finest, which Michelangelo "highly commended," and which an Emperor and a Duke bickered over, the

⁴The painting in the Pitti is larger than ours, though the figure itself is of about the same scale, that is to say, a trifle over life-size. It is possible that the canvas of our work may have lost a little at its edges in past remountings as is so often the case with old pictures.

bribe price of two populous cities and wide territories.¹⁵

It has no pedigree. It turned up in Paris a little more than a year ago, having been bought as an unknown work out of the château of the Comtesse de Vögüé near Dijon. A. S. Drey, the Munich antiquary, secured the canvas and from him the Museum bought it in February. No one knows how it reached France. Many pictures were carried out of Spain at the time of the Napoleonic wars. Uncertainties of titles of ownership might have induced a reticence in regard to the ascriptions and provenance of some of these, and a merely oral tradition held by only a few would be in danger of disappearing in the course of several generations. But these are idle suppositions, and unimportant after all, in comparison with the merit of the painting.

One finds in the picture not only the likeness of Alfonso, but something more as well—the grandeur and magnificence of a prince in Renaissance Italy. It is both a likeness and a ceremonial representation. The head is proudly poised above the exaggerated bulk of the shoulders, made gigantic by means of the broad fur collar and the heavily padded oversleeves. At first glance one feels the idealization. Thus the Duke wished to go down to posterity—commanding and illustrious. He is conscious that he is observed by all. Then one sees the man himself not on parade. It is by no mere accident of birth that he maintains his dukedom; it is fought for and won by each day's decisions. Though still under fifty his face already shows the ravages of high stakes and desperate hazards. He is cruel and resolute like a beast of prey, crafty, self-confident, greedy though most fastidious, and with it all grandiose and sumptuous like the Late Renaissance itself—which indeed he perfectly typifies.

BRYSON BURROUGHS.

¹⁵The identification of our picture with Titian's earlier portrait of Alfonso was first made by Dr. Georg Gronau. Dr. Gronau will publish his conclusions in a forthcoming number of the *Jahrbuch der preussischen Kunstsammlungen*.